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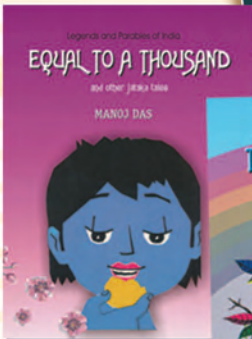
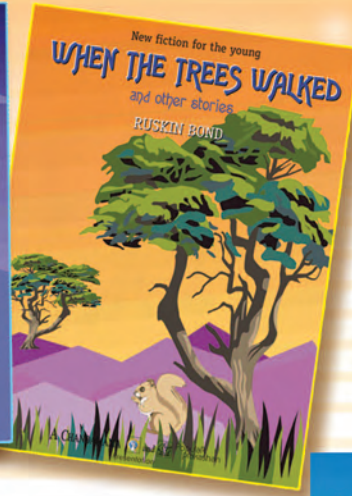
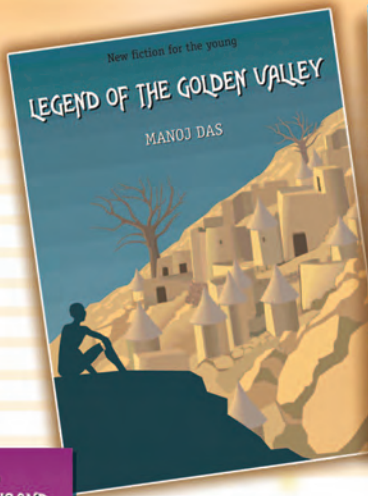
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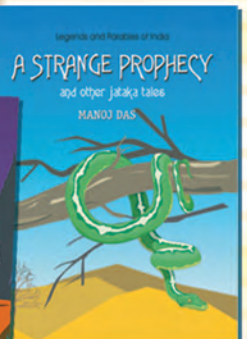
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SPORT OR SPORTING?

Today, in every sport, and every game, the contestants, their fans and sponsors forget that everybody cannot be winners, and some will be losers as well. Commercialisation has not only stepped in but has spread its tentacles, so much so sportsmen and women have come to be regarded as belonging to a class by themselves. The victorious among them, besides earning laurels, are enticed by offers of extra monetary benefit and fame. We find them being made “brand ambassadors” of consumer products, and of campaigns and projects, both official and non-official. Let sports persons be sports persons and not salesmen.

No doubt, victors easily become heroes or icons in the public eye overnight and are glorified by the media. The hype that is created unfortunately adds stress and psychological pressure on the players; with the result, their performance tends to suffer. When they fail to keep up their image, they fall into disgrace and the public turns hostile and takes it on them.

All this reminds us of one of the incidents in our great epic, the *Mahabharata*. Dronacharya, the *guru* of the Pandava and Kaurava princes, with the permission of King Dhritarashtra, holds a tournament to exhibit the skills of his pupils. As we all know, the five Pandavas are victorious in all the disciplines they participated. It can be said that the animosity between the Kauravas and their cousins started that day, ending in the Kurukshetra war.

Let games be played, matches and tournaments be conducted, in what is generally called a ‘sporting spirit’.

All political parties die at last of swallowing
their own lives. - **John Arbuthnot**

The essence of a free government consists in an
effectual control of rivalries. - **John Adams**

Our responsibility; every opportunity, an obligation,
every possession, a duty. - **John D. Rockefeller Jr.**

Work of genius are the first things in the world. - **John Keats**

Visit us at : <http://www.chandamama.org>

Reader Jubel D'Cruz, Mumbai, writes:

I am 48. *Chandamama* has been my favourite, and will always remain my favourite. I have been reading the magazine from my school days, and I feel the older issues were better, as they had more stories in them.

MAIL BAG



This came from Dibyajyoti Parida, Balasore:

I am a boy hailing from a small town in Orissa. I love my *Chandamama* very much. I read it as my text-book. It not only entertains but educate us very much. My parents, too, love to read it. I wish for the long life of *Chandamama*.

Reader Mukul S.K., Mysore, writes:

I am 13 years old. I am reading *Chandamama* for the past 6 months. It is a fantastic magazine. I liked "The Seeker of Praise" in the April issue. It will be nice if *Chandamama* is converted into a fortnightly magazine.

By e-mail from Adil Ahmed:

I am 11 years old. I am reading *Chandamama* from last year. I like the excellent stories from Ruskin Bond, Fearless Four, Arabian Nights, Dushtu Dattu, and the humorous (Birbal) stories. They are really entertaining. The Kaleidoscope items are very nice. I congratulate the *Chandamama* team for publishing such a super magazine. It is good work; I hope you will keep it up.

This came from P.G. Shiva, Hyderabad:

I like Fearless Four and Arabian Nights. Also the folk tales. I congratulate *Chandamama* on its fantastic journey of completing 60 years.

Reader P.M. Logaperumal of Chennai writes:

Chandamama is a wonderful magazine, helping children to acquire knowledge. My favourites are the Jataka Tales, humorous stories, Fearless Four, Garuda, Kaleidoscope, and Arabian Nights. Could you provide the meanings of hard words? This is a great magazine for joy.

This came from A. Sravan of Hyderabad:

I like the Vikram-Vetala stories, Fearless Four and the new serial "Krishna". There should be a page for pen-friends.

By e-mail from Pooja Prasad:

I love to read *Chandamama*. I like Fearless Four most. *Chandamama* is the best of all magazines.





NEW TALES
OF KING
VIKRAM AND
THE VETALA

CHOOSING A COMMANDER

The cremation ground presented an eerie spectacle on that dark night. The moon was hidden behind the clouds, and it was drizzling intermittently. The pitch darkness was relieved only by occasional flashes of lightning that lit up the sombre scene, causing an eerie dance of jerky shadows in the cremation ground.

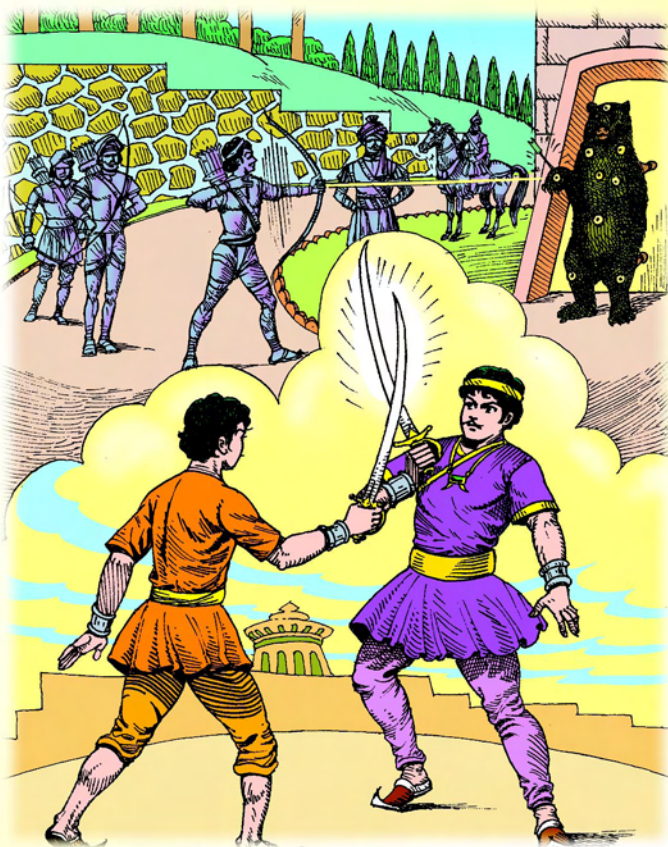
Occasionally, a jackal's spine-chilling howl or the blood-curdling laughter of some invisible evil spirit cut into the silence that hung like a shroud over the area. Altogether, it was a scene that would strike terror into the bravest heart. But nothing could daunt the intrepid King Vikram. Once again, he made his way to the gnarled tree from which the corpse was hanging. Bones crunched under his feet, and a screeching ghost rose from the dust in shuddering frenzy as he marched determinedly ahead.

Oblivious to everything but the mission at hand, he brought the hanging corpse down by cutting the rope with his sword. Slinging it astride his shoulder, he had just begun his return journey when the vampire that possessed the corpse said, "O King! I fail to understand why you embarked on such a dangerous mission in the dead of night. Perhaps you are following the advice of some wise and learned person – your minister, perhaps. But sometimes, even the advice of such a person can prove misleading. For instance, let me tell you the story of a king who took a wrong decision, based on the advice of his trusted minister. Listen to it and judge for yourself."

The tale the vampire narrated went as follows:

Mahipal, the King of Virpur, was an able ruler. In all administrative matters, he would take decisions after consulting his intelligent and far-sighted minister, Dharmasila.

Following the sudden and untimely death of his army



commander, the king had to appoint a new commander. He left the job of choosing the right candidate to Dharmasila.

After testing the generals in service, Dharmasila concluded that none of them was suitable for the post. He realised that he would have to go for a new recruit.

Acting on his advice, the king issued a proclamation, declaring that the post of commander had fallen vacant and all aspirants should participate in a contest to be held in the capital on a particular day.

Numerous candidates turned up at the venue on the appointed day. They were put through a series of competitions that tested their skills at archery, fencing, wrestling and athletics. At the end of the contest, Minister Dharmasila shortlisted two candidates as being eminently suited for the commander's post. They were Sushil and Roopsen.

They were found to be equally good in all the martial arts. It was impossible for the minister to choose from between them. After much thought, he finally came to a decision. Calling both the youths, he announced, "Both of you have proved your mettle as fine warriors. If I were

to select one of you for the commander's post, it would be an injustice to the other. The commander's post is a highly responsible one, requiring not just valour and physical prowess but intelligence of a high order. Now, I would like to test your mental ability. Are you ready for this?"

"Certainly. It is but natural to test us for intelligence when the decision cannot be taken based on martial skills alone," answered Sushil promptly.

"I, too, have no objection to such a test," said Roopsen.

"In that case, I shall pose three questions to you in front of the king and the court. The person whose answers are found to be most suitable will be chosen for the post of commander," said Dharmasila.

Both Sushil and Roopsen agreed to the condition. The minister then asked them to appear before the court the next morning.

They presented themselves in the court at the appointed hour. They were shown to their seats.

Minister Dharmasila then rose. After greeting the king and the court, he turned to the candidates and said, "This is my first question. Suppose you were walking along the main highway in the city. Suddenly you come across two young men fighting on the road. What would you do in such a situation?"

Sushil said, "Sir, Roopsen is younger than I. So, let him be given the chance to speak first."

The minister nodded and turned to Roopsen. He said, "Sir, it is an offence to fight on the highway. So, I would arrest those two and put them in jail. After that, I would ask them why they were fighting, and bring the matter to the king so that he could judge the dispute."

Next, it was Sushil's turn to answer the same question. He said, "If the two men were fighting on the highway, there must surely be some good reason! I would first investigate and learn that reason. Then I would find out who is at fault, and settle the dispute."

Whispers of appreciation rose from the audience at this response. Dharmasila nodded and went on, "I now go on to the second question. You come to know that a group of rebels are stirring up a popular revolt by instigating

the masses against the king. What would be your next step?"

"Using my spies, I would get details about the rebels' moves. I would find out how strong they are, what kind of arms they possess, and who their leader is. I would also learn whether they enjoy the support of the common people and whether any neighbouring king is helping them. Then I would bring out the army in full force to crush them. No one can revolt against my king and get away with it!" declared Roopsen passionately.

But Sushil's answer was different. "If so many people commit an act of treason, it is surely an indication of some lapse in the administration. I would talk to the rebels and find out the reason for their revolt. If they have a genuine grievance, I would present the matter to the king for redress and set them free. If, on the other hand, their only motive was overweening ambition, I would punish them without hesitation."

His astute reply was greeted by applause from the audience. The minister nodded in approval and said, "And now for my third question. You are out on a hunt with the king, when he is attacked by a lion all of a sudden. What would you do?"

"What else? I would remove the king from the spot and confront the lion alone. I would even give my life to save the king, if necessary!" answered Roopsen unhesitatingly.

"What about you?" asked Dharmasila, turning to Sushil.

"If I were with the king, there is no question of such a situation ever arising, for, I am always watchful!" declared Sushil confidently. Again, his reply was greeted with loud applause, where the king too joined in.

For a moment, the minister was lost in thought. Then, he turned to the two youths and said, "Gentlemen, I had thought of asking you three questions. But now, I have decided to ask one more. Imagine that three countries border our kingdom. One of them is rich in gold and gems; the second is equipped with an excellent armoury; and the third has a very well-stocked granary. If you had to go to war with all the three, which would you attack first?"



"I fail to understand what this question has to do with the recruitment process!" said Roopsen irritably. "However, to answer your question, the commander's job is to obey the king's order. It is for the king and the minister to decide who should be attacked first. I shall launch the war campaign as per the king's order and I shall succeed, too."

Minister Dharmasila now turned to Sushil. He said, "The primary duty of the commander is to strengthen the army. Good weapons are essential for a powerful army, as they boost the soldiers' morale and enable them to win in battle. So, I would launch the campaign with an attack on the second kingdom, so that we can gain possession of its weapons."

His answer left the entire assembly gasping in admiration at his sagacity. There was no doubt among the courtiers that Sushil would be the one to be chosen for the commander's post.

But much to the consternation of the assembly, Dharmasila, after a pause, announced that Roopsen had been selected as the new commander. The king agreed with his decision.

Concluding the story at this point, the vampire demanded, “O King! After Sushil and Roopsen had proved equally well-matched in all the martial arts, Dharmasila announced that a decision would be taken, based on their intelligence. While Roopsen’s answers were all routine ones that showed him as a mere ‘yes-man’ to the king, Sushil’s answers were incisive and revealed him as a thinking and intelligent individual. The entire assembly, including the minister himself, was impressed by his astuteness. Still, the minister chose the less intelligent Roopsen for the post – and what’s more, the king too agreed with his decision! Isn’t this a grave error of judgment on their part? If you know the answer to my question, speak out – otherwise, your head shall shatter into smithereens!”

Without hesitation, King Vikram replied, “There is no doubt that Sushil was the more intelligent of the two, as is revealed by their answers. But Sushil lacked one important qualification for the post of commander. As mentioned by Roopsen, a commander’s job is to motivate

his soldiers and carry out the king’s orders. Taking policy decisions is the prerogative of the king. Even the minister only gives advice; it is for the king to accept or reject it. A commander who takes decisions on his own poses a major threat for the king and the kingdom. Tomorrow, if his views were to differ from those of the king, he would not hesitate to defy the royal order, thus throwing the administration into chaos. A man skilled in warfare, possessing ordinary intelligence and loyal to the king, is definitely a better choice for commander than a highly intelligent but self-willed man. By nominating Roopsen to the post, Dharmasila proved himself to be a far-sighted, shrewd minister.”

On hearing this, the vampire nodded in approval, before going off into peal after peal of thunderous laughter. The next moment, he, along with the corpse, moved off the king’s shoulder with a jerk and flew back to the tree. King Vikram gave a little sigh as he gazed upon the scene. Then, he squared his shoulders and retraced his steps towards the ancient tree.



Annually, the amount of garbage that is dumped in the world’s oceans is three times the weight of fish that is caught from the oceans.

DID YOU KNOW?

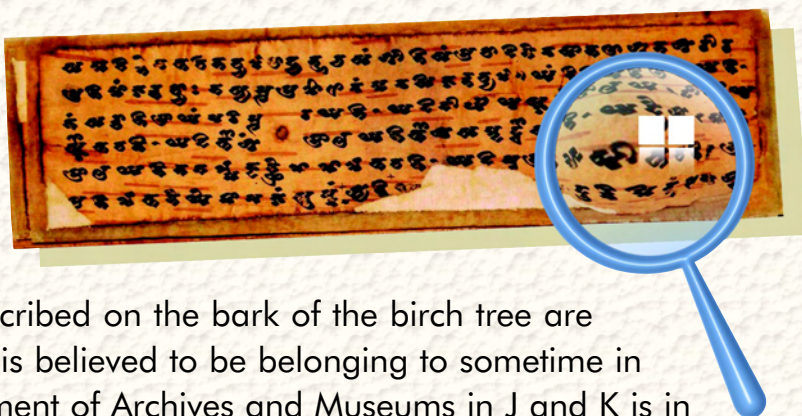
There are 365 steps to the porch of the Capitol in Washington - one for each day of the year.





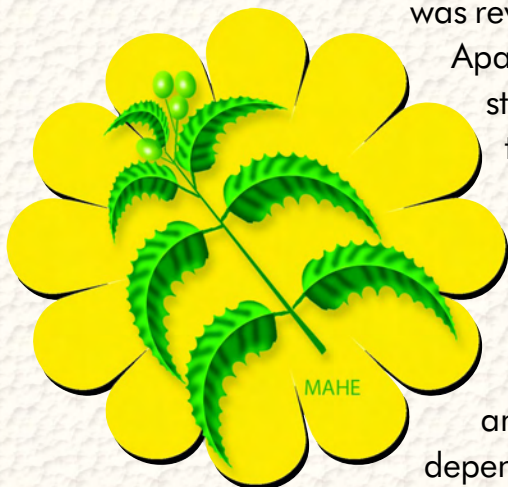
NATIONAL TREASURE

The State of Jammu and Kashmir has a repository of some 16,000 rare manuscripts in different languages and on various subjects like literature, geography, history, religion, tantra, astrology and medicine. The Gilgit Manuscripts inscribed on the bark of the birch tree are considered precious and priceless. It is believed to be belonging to sometime in the 5th/6th century A.D. The Department of Archives and Museums in J and K is in possession of the Gilgit Manuscripts considered one of the oldest records in the world. It has now been declared a 'national treasure' by the Central Government, which has recommended that it be included in UNESCO's Memory of World Register along with the Rig Veda.



NEEM VS. AIR-CONDITIONER

The Neem (Arya Vep) has been an exclusive Indian plant. Every part of it, especially the leaves, is of immense benefit to human beings. During the life time of one tree—it can live up to 300 years—the benefits it gives are valued at around 30,000 dollars or Rs. 13 lakh. This was revealed at an international seminar held in Delhi in February.



Apart from their medicinal properties, the leaves of one tree is stated to act like ten air-conditioners, because they reduce the heat of the environs by ten degrees. The parts of the tree, besides being used in medicines, are also used in cosmetics and making household items. The leaves are good disinfectants, too. The seminar sounded a warning to India. Countries like Australia and Vietnam have started planting neem, and if we do not protect the living trees and at the same time plant more, the world would come to depend more on other countries to become beneficiaries of neem.



From the
pen of
RUSKIN BOND

TO GO AWAY OR STAY BACK?

Late that night, Grandfather wondered if he had spoken too soon. There was another strong tremor, and Mumtaz's frail hut swayed and swung as though it were a hot-air balloon. In the town, more buildings came down.

Grandfather had been wrong about the weather, too, because it did not stop raining and he had to give up his plan to sleep outside. Everyone else had slept on the floor of the hut, using bits of torn carpet and bedding rescued from the house. It was a tight squeeze, with Mumtaz and his wife and four small children taking up half the space, and Grandmother and the family taking up the other half. Nobody slept much, except for Mukesh and the smaller children.

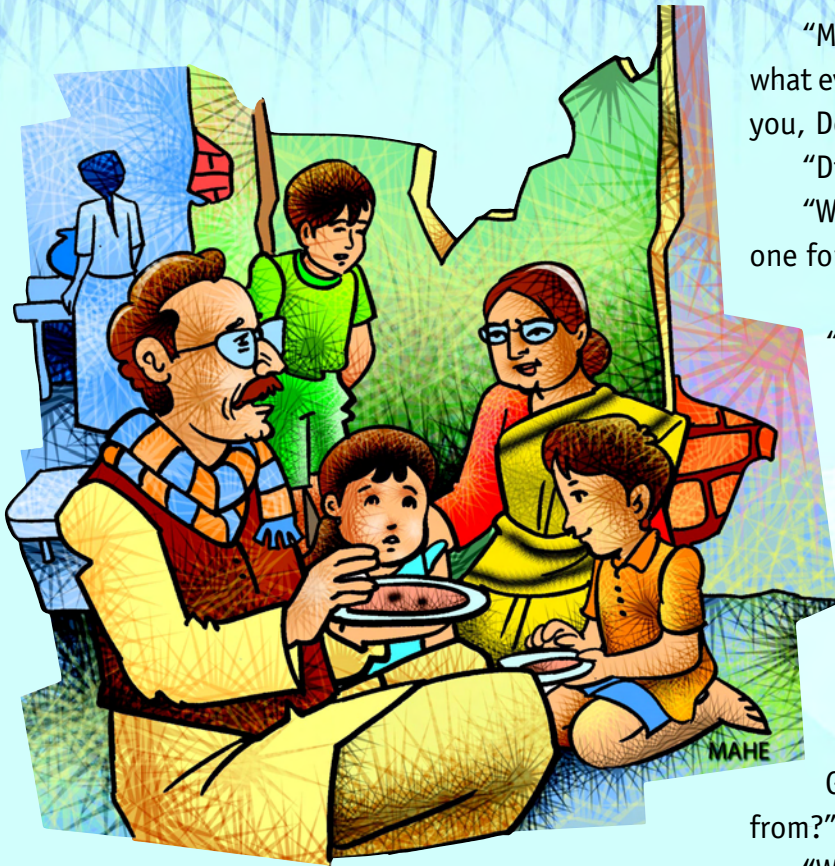
In the middle of the night, Pickle finally succeeded in digging his way out of the rubble. He was white with plaster, and one of his long ears had almost come off. He sat down outside the hut and howled for most of the night. Other dogs in other parts of the town took up, so it was a weird, frightening sort of night, what with the wind, the rain, the howling—and always the fear of another earth tremor.

Grandfather had noticed that, although the hut swayed this way and that when there was a tremor, it showed no signs of falling down—unlike the big brick and stone buildings that had come down so quickly. Indeed, although they did not know it then, almost everything made of bricks and masonry had been levelled to the ground. Wooden structures, no matter how rickety, had withstood the earthquake.

The full extent of the damage would not be known for a few days, because the earthquake had been felt all over Assam and parts of Bengal. A train had overturned at one place, while another came off the rails. Over a thousand people lost their lives in the Cherrapunji Hills. The mighty Brahmaputra river burst its banks and many farmers were drowned in the flood. In one small town, two elephants sat down in the bazaar and refused to get up until the following morning. One man was lucky; when the walls of his house came down, a pot of coins showered down on him. But no one else found any treasure.

It rained all night, and although the main shock of the earthquake had passed, minor shocks took place at regular intervals of five minutes or so. Rakesh stayed awake with the grown-ups. He was sure the school buildings had fallen, and that there wouldn't





be school for months. There wouldn't be much else, either.

Early in the morning, Mumtaz got up to make tea on his small primus-stove. Grandfather got up and went outside. It had stopped raining, but even the sky looked wounded as the sun came up red and angry. For many, it would be a long, sad day.

Soon the children were up and playing around the house. Grandmother opened a tin of sardines—sardine-tins were earthquake-proof, it seemed—while Mumtaz's wife made *chapattis*. They went quite well with the sardines. Pickle enjoyed them, too. Grandmother had washed and bandaged his head, and he was beginning to feel normal again.

"Will we be going away?" asked Rakesh, munching a sardine rolled up in a chapatti.

"I suppose we'll have to," said Grandmother. "We can go to Calcutta, or stay with your father in the tea-estate."

"I don't want to go," said Mukesh.

"Mukesh always wants to do the opposite of what everyone else wants," said Rakesh. "What about you, Dolly? What do you want to do?"

"Dig up my doll's house," said Dolly.

"We'll get you another," said Rakesh. "I'll make one for you."

"It'll have to be Calcutta," said Grandfather. "There are schools there. Lots of them."

"No," said Rakesh. "We like it here. The school will start again."

"But we don't have a house now!"

"We can build it again, can't we?"

"Yes," agreed Mukesh. "We can build it again!"

"Build it again," repeated Dolly, "build it again!"

"All easier said than done," said Grandmother. "But where's the money to come from?"

"What's our Daddy for?" Rakesh wanted to know. "He has a job. He can send us money to build a new house, can't he? That's what fathers are for!"

"Yes, I suppose he could," said Grandmother, opening another tin of sardines. "That's what sons are for!"

Grandfather was standing at the gate when he saw his friend Azad, the carpenter, passing along the road, looking drawn and pale. Azad raised his hand in greeting and made as if to pass on; usually he would stop to talk.

"What's the hurry, Azad?" asked Grandfather. "There's going to be enough work in town to keep you busy for more than a year."

"But for what? For whom?" said Azad, without stopping. "My wife and daughter are lying in the military hospital—it's the only one left—and I don't know if they will live... I'm sleeping there, too, as my own house has gone!"

And there were others like him who had suffered greatly... Mumtaz brought home an eight-year-old

girl, a distant cousin of his who had lost both her parents when the roof of their house fell in.

"How will she manage alone?" asked Grandmother.

"I'll look after her," said Mumtaz. "I wanted another daughter."

"It won't be easy for you," said Grandmother. "You must let us help."

"It is God's will," said Mumtaz. "He has spared us—we must care for those who were not so fortunate."

While most of the survivors of the earthquake

A neighbour looked over the broken wall and asked, "Aren't you people leaving?"

"No," said Grandfather. "We're staying."

"The experts say there's sure to be another earthquake."

"Who knows?" said Grandfather.

"Don't you believe the experts?"

"Did they predict *this* earthquake?"

"No, they didn't," admitted the neighbour.

"So, why run away? Where are you off to?"

"Cuttack."

"The experts predict there'll be a cyclone in Cuttack," whispered Grandfather.

The neighbour threw up his arms in horror and walked away, looking thoughtful; perhaps Cuttack wasn't such a good idea after all. Where *does* one go, in order to escape disaster?

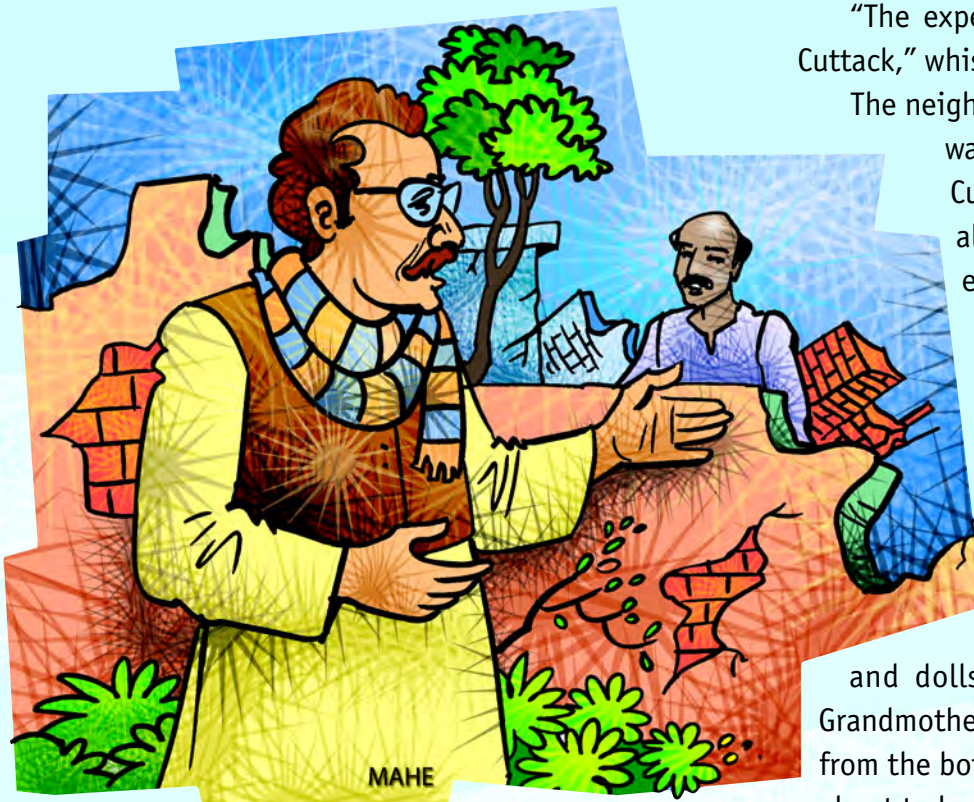
Grandfather and his family thus decided to stay where they had always lived and face it out. Maybe there would be another earthquake. But they'd be prepared this time. Meanwhile, there were a few compensations. Mukesh and Dolly had recovered some of their toys

and dolls, battered but still recognizable; Grandmother's oven had turned up almost intact from the bottom of the rubble; and biscuits were about to be made; and Grandfather recovered his twisted tin bath-tub and he hammered it back into shape.

He placed it under the mango tree, filled it with hot water, and took his bath in the afternoon sunshine. There wasn't any soap around but there was plenty of mint in the garden. He started singing at the top of his voice, and the birds, who had just begun to return to the grove, took off in alarm and flew away again.

(Concluded)

(Next month: *Flames in the Forest*)



began leaving the town, Grandfather and his family began the task of putting their house together again. They would clear the rubble, salvage what could still be used, and then start from scratch; but Grandfather had decided to use only the smaller bricks together with light wooden frames. "So that if there's another earthquake," he said, "we can sway and rock like Mumtaz's hut, instead of crashing to the ground."

"I suppose there's something to be learnt from a disaster," said Grandmother.



Deepak and his friends are on a holiday at Palankhet, a hill station. While their parents rest in the resort, the children play in the garden. Jojo joins them.



They feel tired and go for a drink at the petty shop outside.

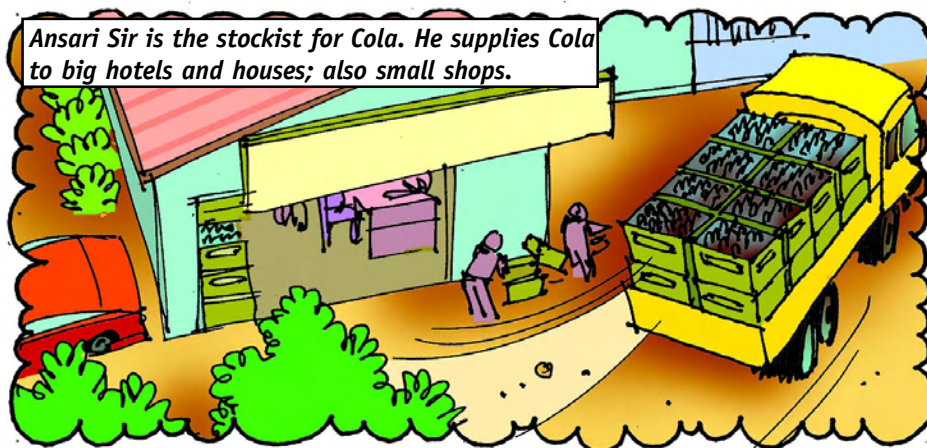


The children's attention is diverted.



The children elicit more details from him.





Ansari Sir is the stockist for Cola. He supplies Cola to big hotels and houses; also small shops.

Thank you for all the information. Here, you may take these empty bottles.



Thank you. Today I make more money.

After the school-boy goes away...



Deepak, there's something fishy about the whole thing.

If Ansari is the stockist, why should he collect empty bottles?



True, Deepak, I smell a rat.

I think this needs some investigation.

Come on, let's follow that boy.

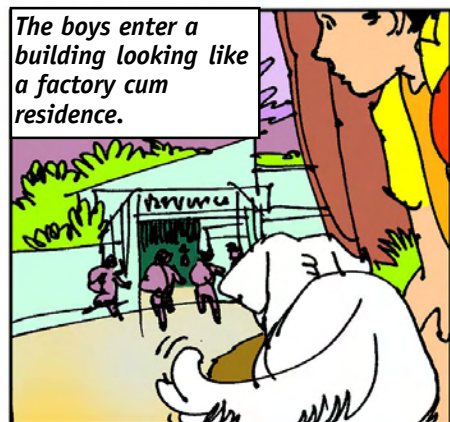
The school-boy is joined by another on the way.



See that we don't lose sight of them.



The four children keep a safe distance, while closing in on the two boys.



The boys enter a building looking like a factory cum residence.



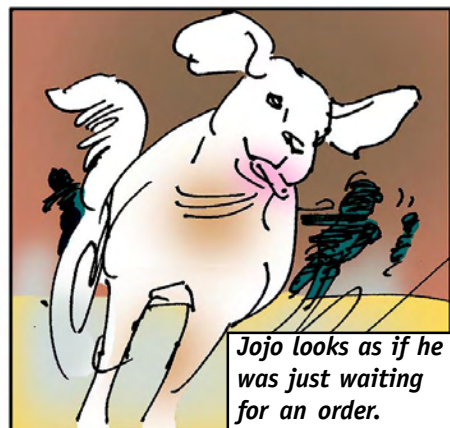
The children discuss a strategy to enter the place.

We'll make Jojo to go in...

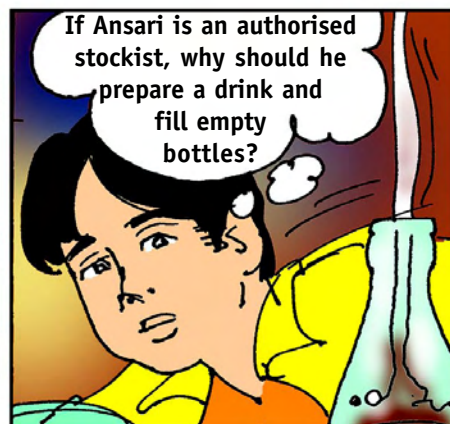
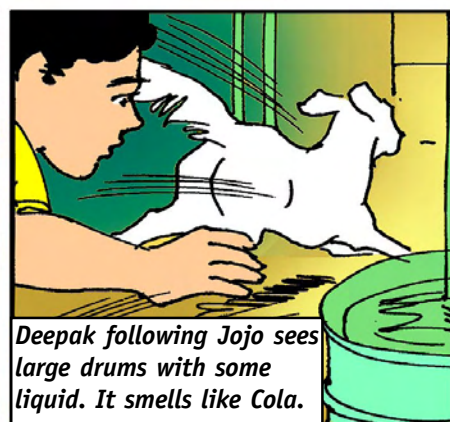
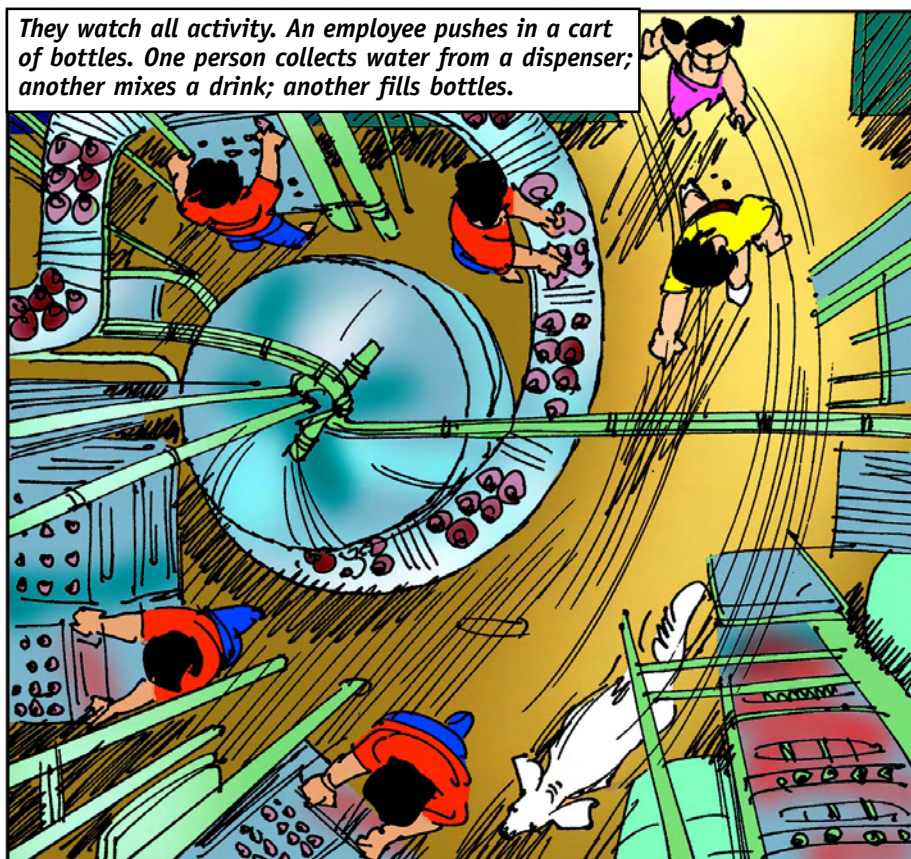
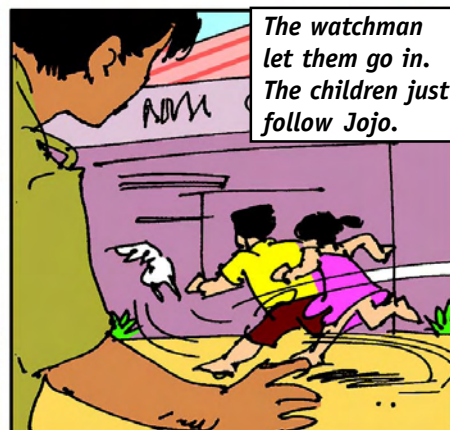
...and two of us will follow as if we want to catch Jojo.

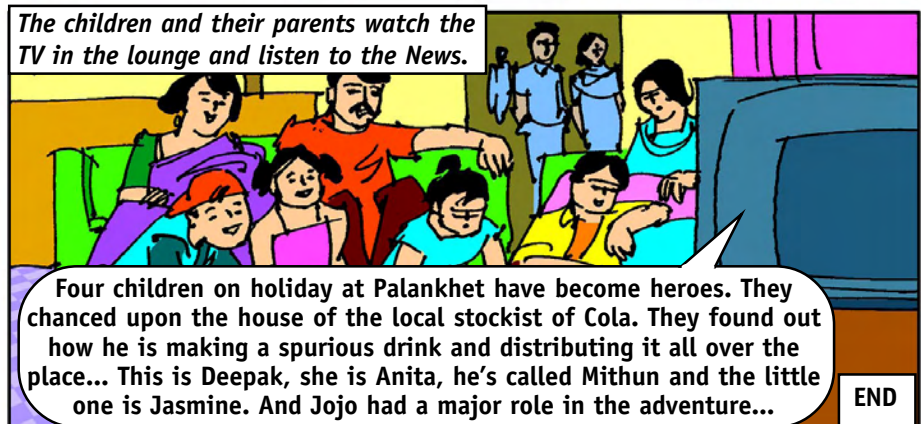
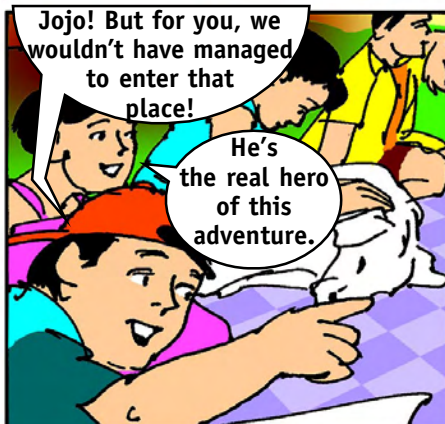
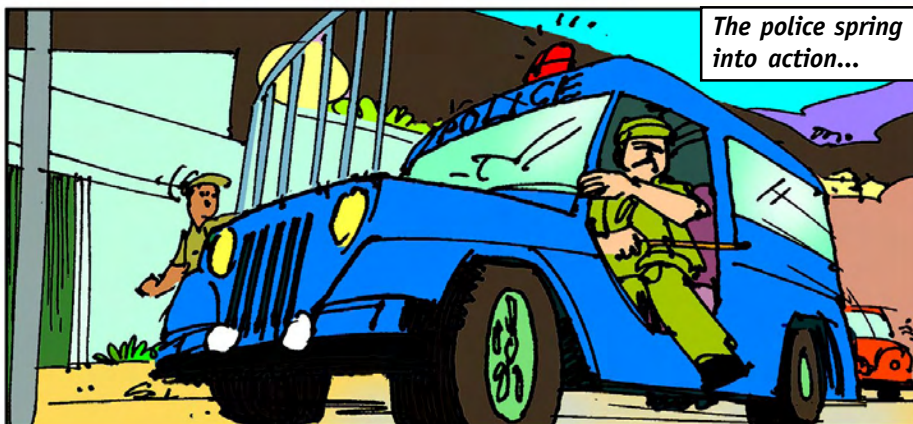
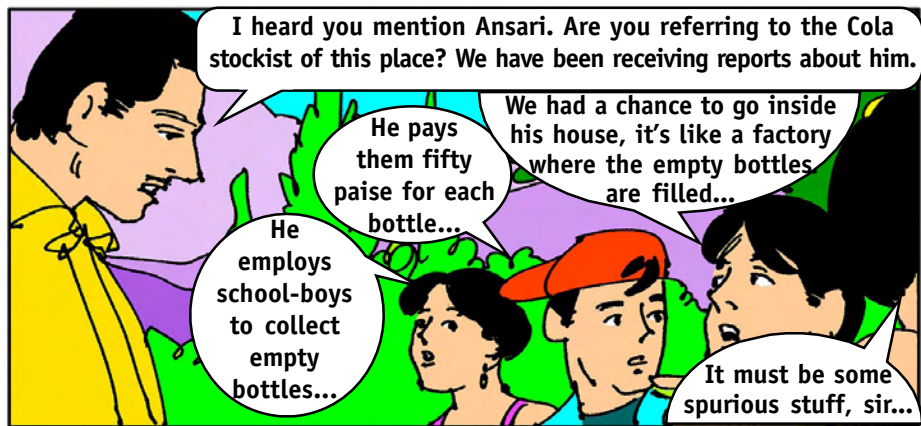
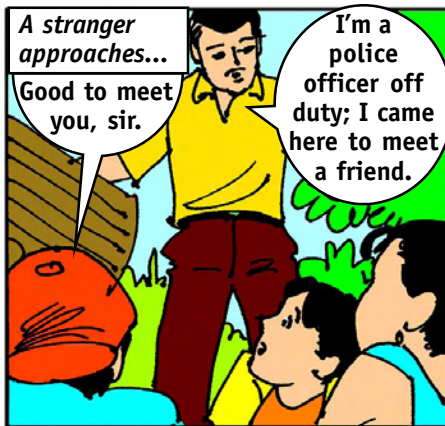
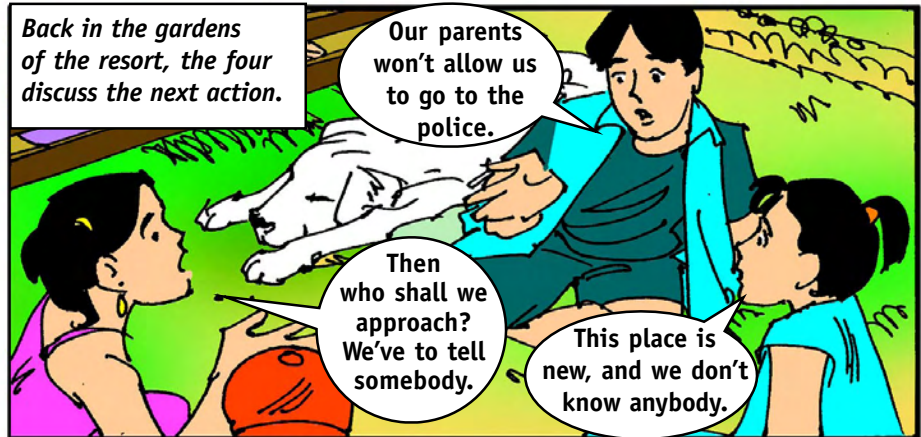


Jojo! See that building? Go in, we'll follow you! Run!!



Jojo looks as if he was just waiting for an order.





THE OIL-MERCHANT'S PARROT

An oil-merchant was keeping a parakeet. It had a beautiful crest on its head. It was very intelligent and used to talk to its master. He was proud of his pet and had a large cage built for it. The cage was hung in a prominent spot in his shop so that his customers could see and admire the bird.

One day, he and his servant were away from the shop when a cat crept in. The parakeet was terrified. It started flapping its wings and squawking agitatedly. The cage swayed violently. It came off the hook and fell on a large jar, which broke into pieces and the oil was spilt all over.

When the oil-merchant returned to his shop and saw the broken jar and oil all over, he was furious. He guessed that the cage must have fallen off the hook, because of the bird's usual playful nature. In a fit of anger, he opened the cage, grabbed the bird by its neck, and pulled off its lovely crest.

From then on the parakeet stopped talking. It felt that the master had been unreasonable.

Almost two weeks passed. One day, a bald man entered the shop to buy oil. The parakeet which had not been talking for many days, suddenly began laughing aloud, jumping up and down in its cage in glee.

"What is amusing you so much?" enquired the merchant.

Between guffaws, the parakeet said, "I'm sure that your customer's master must also be an ill-tempered oil-merchant. How else could he have lost the crest on his head?"

This sudden remark by the parakeet made the oil-merchant ruminate: Wasn't he hasty in his action? Had he not deprived the parakeet of its beautiful crest?



Whatever is begun in anger, ends in shame.

- BENJAMIN FRANKLIN



A PAGE FROM INDIAN HISTORY

A BIRTHDAY

"I had no idea it would be this gorgeous!"

"I'm glad I decided to come to Mandu and not pass it by."

"And now we are to witness something quite remarkable—the birthday celebrations of a Mughal emperor! I must admit we are lucky. Or perhaps it is a case of perfect timing. Call it what you will."

The three British travellers looked at one another as they stood outside the royal palace complex of Mandu, known to everybody as the Shahi Mahal. Close by there were two beautiful lakes—the Kapur Talao and the Munja Talao—which had given the queen's palace, better known as the 'Jahaz Mahal', its name. Built between these two lakes, the palace really looked like a ship.

The foreign travellers had earlier been around the other big lake, Sagar Talao, and noted the marvellous look of the Hindola Mahal (the swinging palace) that stood by the enormous step-well, Champa baoli. This remarkable step-well had rooms all around it that were almost level with the water and kept the rooms delectably cool during the hot summer months. They had also been shown the Nilkanth palace, built by the Mughal governor,

Shah Badgah Khan, for emperor Akbar's Hindu wife. The travellers had read with interest the inscriptions on the wall which spoke of the futility of earthly pomp and glory. And now, tired yet interested, they glanced at the Shahi Mahal.

Roe, Terry and Corryat had been travelling far and wide all these days, taking in the wild beauty of forests, the grandeur of Indian architecture and other remarkable features of a country so different from theirs. On reaching Mandu, they had been made welcome by the emperor himself and given a wonderful place to stay.

It was the last day of August, 1617. On the first of September Mandu was to witness the 45th birthday celebrations of Emperor Jahangir. The three British travellers wondered what it would be like! "No candles or birthday cake, of course," said Roe with a smile.

"But there will be birthday gifts, I am sure," remarked Terry, "to speak nothing of lights and fireworks."

"In any case it will be something well worth witnessing," said Corryat, "however different it might be from our own birthday celebrations."

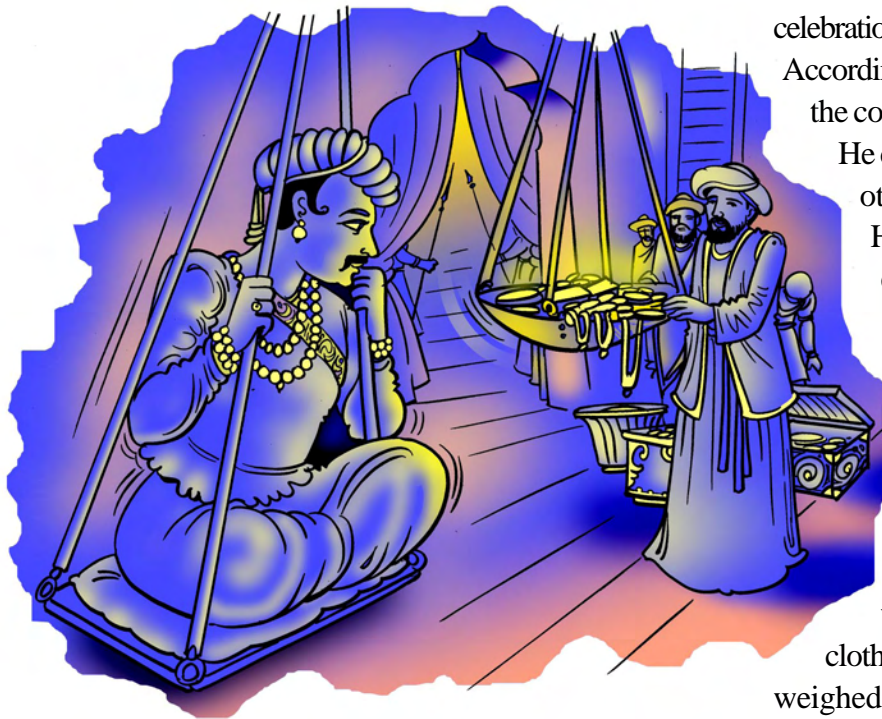
"I'd better make a note of everything in my journal," remarked Roe, "with so many new things and new experiences, I might forget some interesting facts unless I wrote them down."

"Good idea," agreed Terry. "I intend to do the same." "I always make it a point to carry my journal everywhere," added Corryat, "especially when I am visiting new places."

"Who knows, it might well interest others who read it—if they do!" said Roe with a smile.



CELEBRATION



“And make us famous for our travel writing,” said Terry in a jocular tone.

“Now, wouldn’t that be nice—to be remembered because we recorded whatever we saw?” added Corryat.

Sir J.M. Campbell, a renowned scholar interested in the history of India, carefully went through the journals of Roe, Terry and Corryat and wrote a graphic description from their combined writings of how Jahangir had celebrated his birthday in the palace of Baaz Bahadur in Mandu. “The King (Jahangir) was 45 years old, stout but proportionately built and of olive complexion. Roe went to pay his respects and was conducted to Baaz Bahadur’s palace by the Riwa pool. There was a beautiful garden with a great square pond, set all a round with trees and flowers. In the middle of the garden there was a pavilion under which hung the scales on which the king was to be weighed. The scales were of beaten gold, set with precious stones. They were hung by chains of gold, large and massive.”

Emperor Jahangir thus started his birthday

celebrations by getting himself weighed on the gold scales!

According to Campbell, “All around were the nobles of the court seated on rich carpets waiting for the king.

He came, laden with diamonds, rubies, pearls and other precious stones, making a glorious show!

His sword, throne and other accessories were equally rich and splendid. His head, neck, chest, arms and wrists were bedecked with chains of precious stones and he wore two or three rings on every finger.”

The actual weighing ceremony went like this: “The king got on to the scales and was weighed against bags containing gold, silver, jewels and precious stones. Then he was weighed against cloth of woven gold, silk clothes, cotton clothes and spices. Last of all, he was weighed against meat, butter and corn. All these were distributed to the people.”

But the celebration did not end there. After he was weighed, Jahangir ascended the throne and had basins of nuts, almonds and spices of all sorts given to him. The king threw these about, and his nobles scrambled for them. The emperor saw Roe standing away from the crowd. He took him a basin almost full. Then he drank to his nobles, and the nobles pledged his health. The king also drank to the Lord Ambassador whom he always treated with a special respect and consideration and presented him with a golden cup of crusted with rubies and emeralds.”

The birthday celebrations continued for quite a few days with everyone feasting, drinking and making merry. However, Jahangir’s happiness remained incomplete because his favourite son, Shah Jahan, although expected to be present for the birthday celebrations, could not make it on the day. However, when he finally arrived at Mandu to wish his father a belated happy birthday, he came laden with the most wonderful birthday gifts.

- Swapna Dutta

SCIENCE FAIR



- By **Rosscode
Krishna Pillai**

MAY-BORN: DOROTHY HODGKIN



Dorothy Mary Crowfoot Hodgkin, the third woman to win the Nobel Prize in chemistry, who discovered the structures of penicillin, vitamin B-12, and insulin was born on May 12, 1910 in Cairo, Egypt. Her father, John Crowfoot, and mother, Grace Mary, were archaeologists in West Asia. When Dorothy was four years old, she was sent to England to the care of her relatives during World War I. After the war, her mother joined Dorothy and her sister in England. She later described the period under her mother's care as the happiest in her life.

Even as a child, she was fascinated by minerals and crystals and enjoyed using a mineral analysis kit presented to her by a family friend. She then began to be interested in chemistry and found her

chosen field in science when, on her 16th birthday, her mother gave her a book dealing with the use of X-rays in analysing crystals and finding atoms and molecules in them. She studied physics and chemistry at Somerville College, Oxford. After graduation in 1932, she joined Cambridge and collaborated with J.D.Bernal, eminent scientist, who whetted her interest in the use of X-ray crystallography. Together they worked out the three-dimensional structures of a wide variety of natural products. The first protein analysed was the digestive enzyme, pepsin. Dorothy returned to Oxford in 1934 to become a tutor and later Professor. She got her Ph.D. from Cambridge three years later. She married Thomas I. Hodgkin, a historian. They had three children.

At Oxford, she pioneered the application of X-ray crystallography to determine the exact three-dimensional structures of complex biochemical molecules. What she considered as her "greatest scientific achievement", namely the discovery of the structure of insulin, was initiated in 1934, when her Professor, Sir Robert Robinson, Nobel Laureate in chemistry, gave her a sample of crystalline insulin for study. It took her 35 years of dedicated intensive research involving X-ray diffraction and electronic computer analysis to finally determine the complex structure of insulin and map its molecular configuration of 777 atoms. This discovery led to practical applications benefiting diabetics all over the world.

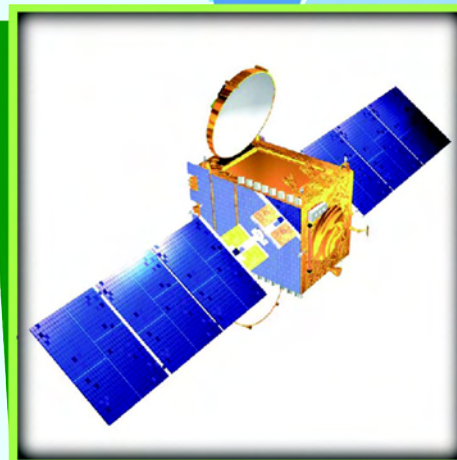
Dorothy Hodgkin won numerous honours including the Nobel Prize in 1964, and Britain's Order of Merit, the highest royal honour –she was the second woman to have been bestowed this honour, the other being Florence Nightingale. She was also elected Fellow of the Royal Society.

On an invitation from the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, she delivered the Azad Memorial Lecture in 1973. She was made an honorary fellow of the Indian Academy of Sciences.

She suffered from rheumatoid arthritis from the age of 24, but toured all over the globe for the sake of science. She died from a stroke at her home in England on July 29, 1994.

INSAT-4B IN ORBIT

Indian Space Research Organisation's INSAT-4B, launched on March 12, by the European launch vehicle, Ariane, last, has substantially added to the country's telecommunication services. It is the tenth satellite of Indian National Satellite (INSAT), the largest domestic communication system in the Asia Pacific Region, established in 1983. INSAT-4B is providing much greater capacity for Direct-to Home (DTH) television broadcasting and other communication and TV facilities in India. It provides also for meteorology including disaster warning, tele-education and telemedicine.



The 3,025 kg INSAT-4B, launched from Kourou in French Guyana, is now successfully operating from its geosynchronous orbit in space, about 36,000 km above the Earth's equator. It is the second satellite in the INSAT-4 series. The first was launched on December 22, 2005. Measuring 15.4 m with its two solar arrays, INSAT-4B is tracked, monitored and controlled from the Master Control Facility (MCF) at Hassan, in Karnataka, which continuously issues regular commands to the satellite. The satellite has 12 high power Ku-band transponders and 12 C-band transponders. With the addition of these, the entire INSAT system has 199 transponders operating from space and also very high resolution instruments and Charged Coupled Device (CCD) cameras for providing meteorological data. It transmits and receives messages using its two deployable antennas.

CULTIVATORS OF SCIENCE

The word "Scientist" appeared in English only in 1840. It was coined by William Whewell, a Cambridge historian. He introduced the word thus: "We need very much a name to describe a cultivator of science in general. I should incline to call him a scientist." It was Whewell who also originated the word "Physicist" in 1840.

The word "Science" came from the Latin word "sciens" which means "knowing". The term, "astronomer", came into use in 1400, "mathematician" a few decades later, "zoologist" and "botanist" in the 1600s, "geologist" and "psychologist" in the 1700s and "biologist" two centuries later.

SCIENCE QUIZ



- To which galaxy does the Earth belong?
 - Andromeda;
 - The Milky Way;
 - Large Magellanic Cloud;
 - Centaurus A.
- What is the scientific name for measurement of time?
 - chronology; b. topology;
 - horology; d. numerology.
- Which metal has the highest boiling point?
 - mercury; b. tungsten; c. platinum; d. copper
- Who compiled the first logarithmic tables?
 - Newton; b. John Napier;
 - Hollerith; d. J. Burgi.

ANSWER: 1. b. The Milky Way, 2. c. horology, 3. b. tungsten - boiling point 5730 degrees C, 4. John Napier in 1614.



STORY OF

Krishna

-Manoj Das

Story so far : Princess Devaki was married to Vasudev. A prophecy warned Kamsa, the demoniac king of Mathura, that her eighth child shall bring about his death. He imprisoned both Devaki and her husband in an apartment of his castle and killed their first child as soon as it was born.

The people of Mathura heard with awe and amazement what Kamsa did at night! It was a sad day for most. Many cursed their fate that they had to suffer the rule of a tyrant and to bear with such barbaric deeds. The sensible ones among the ministers and the courtiers walked with their heads hung.

But there were also some who felt amused or happy at such bizarre tidings.

They were the picked ones. In Kamsa they had found their hero!

A noble deed inspires nobility in many. An evil deed encourages some to do evil. And when a good or a bad example is set by a king or a leader, its influence is always widespread. A climate marked by tender sunlight, a soothing breeze, and the fragrance of flowers makes one happy even when one is not conscious of these



3. BIRTH OF THE DIVINE CHILD

elements. One feels depressed when the atmosphere is damp or foul. Similarly, in an atmosphere dominated by goodwill, compassion, and trust, virtues lying hidden in people flourish. When cruelty and inhumanity in a powerful few go unchallenged, many others think that they too could do anything they liked and get away with their misdeeds.

Kamsa's action in killing Devaki's child vitiated the atmosphere of Mathura as well as of the neighbouring kingdoms. There were weak-minded kings for whom Kamsa became a model. They thought it was ideal to be selfish and ruthless.

However, one good outcome of the prophecy about Kamsa's doom was, he began spending more and more of his time brooding over his own fate. Fear of the mysterious foe yet to be born dampened his enthusiasm for going out to harass his innocent subjects or humiliate the sages.

Devaki and Vasudeva continued to live as prisoners. Vasudeva had some freedom of movement, but Devaki had none.

Kamsa persisted in his brutality. He went on destroying their children, one after another, year after year. It became a sinister ritual with him: he would snatch the child from Devaki, hurry to the courtyard and, holding the child by its legs, raise it high and dash it on a stone. While most of the inmates of the palace shunned the sight, Kamsa nevertheless had a group of flatterers and cronies to cheer him.

Devaki was to give birth to her seventh child. The couple came to know through their dreams that a great soul was to be born. Devaki, naturally, was anxious to protect it from Kamsa's wrath. But where could she find someone who would help her in that regard? Her ardent prayers went up to the Divine Mother.

Vasudeva had married Devaki because his first wife, Rohini, had remained childless. Rohini's prayer for a child and Devaki's prayer for saving the child about to be born of her, were granted at the same time. An emanation of the Divine Mother, Mahamaya, capable of wondrous performances – came down and transferred the child from Devaki's womb to that of Rohini. The child – later to be



famous as Balarama – grew in the safety of the house of Nanda, the chieftain of the cowherd tribe and a dear friend of Vasudeva, at Gopa across the river Yamuna.

Kamsa was informed by the maids taking care of Devaki that the child had died in her womb. Kamsa made enquiries and saw no reason to doubt the report.

A year or so later the maids once again informed Kamsa of Princess Devaki expecting yet another child. The news gave him the creeps. For, this was going to be the dreaded eighth child of Devaki!

At the same time, he found some solace in the thought that once this child had been destroyed, he would be free from all anxieties.

Every passing day added to his tension. At least, as the maids kept bringing him reports that the child was to be born in a day or two, Kamsa found himself in the grip of a terror and fits of trembling. Time and again he would cross the corridor to Devaki's apartment and prick his ears to hear if an infant's cry could be heard. He replaced the human guards by those recruited from a demon horde – more trusted by him. Their vigil over the dwellings of Vasudeva and Devaki never slackened.

It was the eighth day of the dark fortnight of the month of Bhadra. Kamsa was pacing up and down the corridor in the evening when a maid met him and said: "My lord, the princess is expected to give birth to her child tonight."

"Is that so?" asked Kamsa, passing a searching look over the maid. Suddenly, he grew suspicious of all the maids attending upon Devaki. Who knows if they had not been won over by her?

"No maid is to attend upon Devaki tonight!" he roared out his order. He stomped into Devaki's room to ensure that it had been cleared of everybody but Vasudeva. And he ordered the demon guards to knock on his bed-chamber the moment they heard an infant's cry!

A dark, dark night was descending on Mathura. Mammoth clouds looking like floating hills jammed the sky. Even the tiniest of stars found no chink in the clouds for a peep down. A strong wind invaded Kamsa's castle raising a thousand howls and whistles.

Inside their room, Devaki and Vasudeva were in acute agony. The flickering lamp showed Devaki's face growing pale with increasing pain. Vasudeva paced round her bed, sad and helpless.

"If my child is to play any role in fulfilling the will of Providence, the Grace of the Divine Mother must take charge of the situation. She alone can come to our rescue," said Devaki, by way of a poignant prayer.

An erratic gust of wind suddenly extinguished the

lamp. It was the darkest hour of the night Vasudeva closed his eyes in prayer. Next moment, he felt as though a heatless flame flashed in the room. He opened his eyes and saw it to be true: a bluish-golden light had replaced the darkness.

Soon, a beautiful figure emerged from the light.

Vasudeva had a vision of Goddess Mahamaya.

"Pick up your son!" said the Goddess.

"Son?" Vasudeva looked back. Near Devaki, who had fallen into a stupor, lay her eighth child – charming and luminous.

"At once proceed to the palace of Nanda. His queen, Yasoda, has just given birth to a female child. Exchange your son with their daughter and come back," advised the Goddess.

Vasudeva lifted the child and held it in his trembling arms. He was in ecstasy. No artist could have painted a face that could surpass this child's in beauty. Vasudeva found it difficult to take his eyes off the child.

"But, Mother..." he fumbled out his doubts about his ability to go out of Kamsa's castle.

"Don't you worry," said Mahamaya. "All the guards and inmates of the castle – in fact, all the people of Mathura – are plunged in an unconscious sleep. My *Maya* has done it. Proceed without fear!"

With the child held close to his bosom, Vasudeva bowed to Mahamaya and looked at the locked doors.

At once the doors flung open. *(To continue)*



Children IN THE NEWS



A BOOK IN SEVEN DAYS

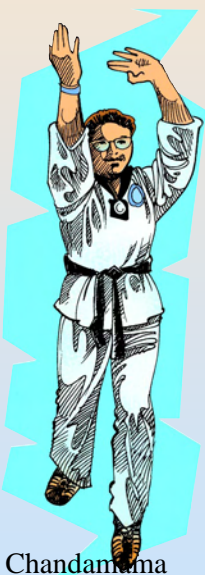
Eight year old Raja Monsingh, studying in Class II at Madras Christian College H.S. School, took only seven days to write a whole book. His *Kid's Recipe for Pizza, Paisa, Peace* was formally released at a gala function early last month. Probably, Raja is India's youngest author—in English, to be precise—but his thoughts are those of an aged philosopher! Here is one example: "There is no such being called God. It was created to make us afraid, so that if we are indisciplined, it can be said that our actions are always being watched." He is very much interested in arts and crafts. In his leisure time, he makes aluminium foil flowers and does glass painting. He sells them and has, it is said, saved more than Rs 20,000. His parents hope that Raja would pursue his literary efforts.

GITA BY HEART

Rishiprada is only five years old, but she can recite all 700 verses of the *Bhagawad Gita* by heart. Her grandfather, Dr. Awadhesh Prasad Choudhary of Raima, a village in Madhubhani, Bihar, noticed that she was fond of learning and reciting Sanskrit verses, and taught her the entire Gita, and amazingly she learnt it by heart. She can recite the verses with full clarity of the language. Father Shatrumardan and mother Savita Devi recall that Rishiprada had shown her talents from a very early age. Many Sanskrit scholars and pundits were astonished when they listened to her recitation of the Gita.



YOUNGEST BLACK BELT



What is common between Jiu-Jitsu, Karate, Kung-Fu and Taekwondo? They are all martial arts of Chinese or Japanese origin. Jaikaran Kanwar (8), a student of Sanskriti School in Delhi, took part in the World Taekwondo contest in Seoul, Korea, where he earned the Black Belt—the highest recognition. One of the judges remarked: "This young man shows the drive and focus that I have seen only in big winners." Jaikaran was declared the youngest Black Belt in Asia. He has just been promoted to Class 3. He is brilliant in mathematics and has been trying out the Japanese way of doing sums.

LIFE ETERNAL

While Brahmadutta was ruling Benares, he had a vassal called Chirayu. Nagarjun, who was an incarnation of Bodhisattva, was a minister of Chirayu.

Nagarjun was both kind and charitable. He was also an expert in chemical and herbal preparations. He discovered a chemical formula by which he made himself as well as the king free from old age and death. But, as it was a formula of very rare chemicals and the process was very costly, he could not extend this immunity to anyone else.

Now, the favourite son of Nagarjun, a brilliant boy named Somadev, suddenly died, plunging his father in deep sorrow.

'There'll be no more deaths!' Nagarjun

swore. "I shall find the means to conquer death at all cost." Chemicals were very costly and too limited to serve entire humanity. So, Nagarjun carried on his researches with herbs, intensely and for a long time. At last, they bore fruit and he was in the final stage of preparing Amrut or the nectar of Eternal Life.

Indra, the ruler of Heaven, was annoyed when he heard of Nagarjun's experiments. He called upon the Aswins, the divine physicians, and told them, "Go to earth and frustrate the experiments of Nagarjun by every means at your disposal."

The Aswins changed themselves into human beings and called on Nagarjun. "O wise Minister, being yourself a past master in administration, why have you embarked upon a scheme which would upset the entire administration of the universe?" they asked, adding: "You're violating the Divine Law which makes man mortal. You're also encroaching upon the rights of the gods who alone have the privilege of conferring immortality upon souls. It's not proper that you should take upon yourself the task of removing the distinction between mortals and immortals. You are, no doubt, aggrieved that your son had died. But we assure you, he is happy in Heaven."

Nagarjun was not entirely convinced by this logic. But, being a reasonable man, he debated within himself whether his aim was really correct.

Soon after this, Jayasen, son of Chirayu, was declared as the future king. Preparations were made and grand festivities were organised for the crowning ceremony.

In the meantime the Aswins returned to Indra and reported to him that they had not succeeded



A JATAKA TALE

in persuading Nagarjun to give up his quest for universal immortality. So, Indra disguised himself as an old Brahmin and went to the Crown Prince, Jayasen.

"I'm sorry for you, young man," he said. "Though you're the Crown Prince, you've no future as a king. You must be aware that Nagarjun has already made your father immune from old age and death. You'll, therefore, die only as the Crown Prince."

Jayasen was now crestfallen on hearing this. He would never get a chance to sit on the throne. What the Brahmin said was true. The old king would still be on the throne after his great grand children, too, had been dead. Thus the crowning ceremony was a cruel farce.

"However," said Indra, "there is a way for getting over this difficulty, if you follow my advice. Nagarjun never denies anything to anyone before he sits for his meal. Go to him and ask him boldly for his head. You'll then see that your way to the throne will be clear."

Crown Prince Jayasen followed the old man's advice and went and asked Nagarjun for his head. Nagarjun did not hesitate even for a moment. He gave the young prince a sword and said, "Take my head!"

But Nagarjun was already immune from old

age and death, and the sword just bounced away from his neck without even giving a scratch.

Meanwhile, the king heard of the whole affair and came running anxiously. He tried to dissuade his son from his foolish attempt.

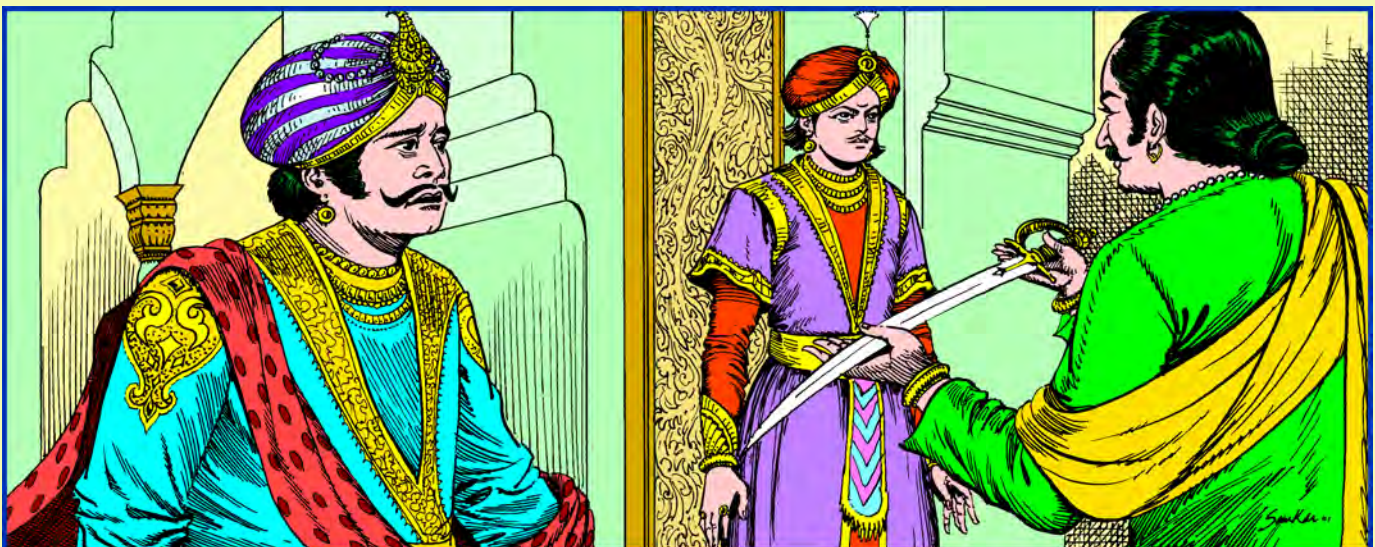
"Do not find fault with your son, O King," Nagarjun said. "He's only an instrument in bigger hands. I'm aware of the entire scheme behind his request. I've given up my head ninety-nine times in my past births. Let this be the hundredth time."

Nagarjun then applied the juice of a herb along the edge of the sword and asked the prince to sever his head. This time, with a single stroke of the sword, the prince separated Nagarjun's head from his body.

Seeing this atrocious act, King Chirayu, too, tried to kill himself but Nagarjun's head said, "Grieve not, my King, I'm always with you."

In utter disgust the king renounced everything, sat his son on the throne and went into the forest to spend his time in penance and meditation.

Thus Jayasen got his throne and Indra had the satisfaction of frustrating Nagarjun's attempts to impart Eternal Life to all human beings of all ages. What Nagarjun had almost succeeded in achieving, no one has attempted again. That is why we are all still mortal.





DIGNITY: FALSE AND TRUE

The 19th century saw the birth of many great Indians—mystics, philosophers, scientists, politicians, freedom fighters and writers. Among those who devoted themselves to social reforms was a towering figure, Pandit Iswarchandra Vidyasagar (1820–91).

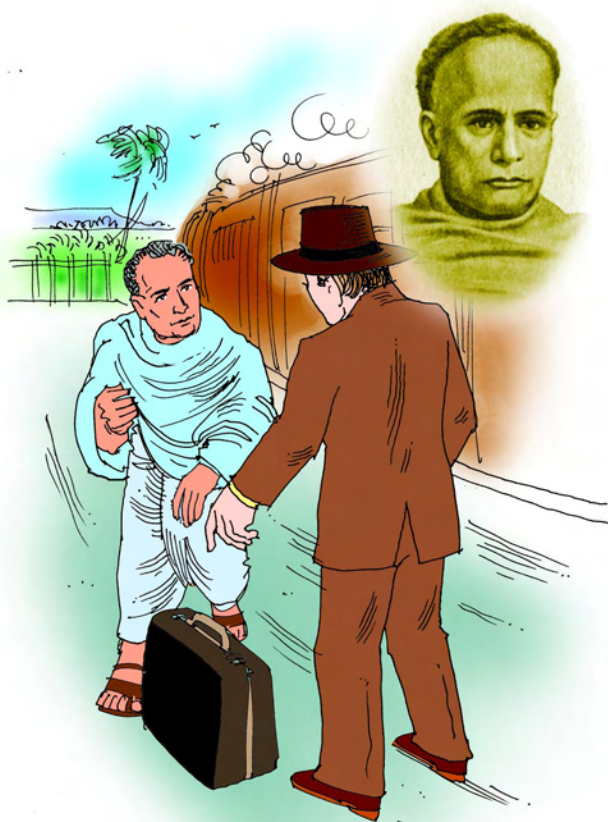
Born in a poor Brahmin family in Medinipur district of (undivided) Bengal, Iswarchandra pursued his studies through hardship and became a professor at the Government Sanskrit College, Kolkata and later its Principal. He is recognized as a trendsetter in Bengali prose.

But what is most noteworthy while he advocated the study of Western philosophy and English language, he never imitated the Western lifestyle. In those days one could not attend any government function unless dressed in the Western way. Iswarchandra who always wore a dhoti and covered his upper body in a cotton shawl and wore slippers instead of shoes, refused to attend any official function.

He was a great scholar in Sanskrit and ancient literature. That explains his title, Vidyasagar – ocean of learning. As a Brahmin, he observed all the sacred rituals, but he always fought against superstitions that passed as holy traditions. In those days, girls were married before they reached their teens. Many of them became widows even before meeting their husbands after the wedding ceremony. Such widows were obliged to lead a painfully austere life, eating only one meal a day, wearing only a white saree and no ornaments of any kind, abstaining from participating in any joyous or holy function, so on and so forth.

Vidyasagar asserted that this custom had no sanction in the scriptures. Society had no right to punish such girls for no fault of theirs. He championed the cause of widow-remarriage, despite violent opposition from the orthodox community. Success came to him when the Government legalized the remarriage of Hindu widows.

One day, a young man in Western dress reached the railway station close to Vidyasagar's house. He had with him only a small suitcase. He shouted, "Coolie! Coolie!" and waited



on the platform. But no porter was to be seen. However, a man looking like a villager walked down to him and lifted his suitcase.

"Do you know where Pandit Vidyasagar lives?" the visitor asked the man.

"I know, Sir."

"Good. Will you take my suitcase there? How much would you charge?" asked the young man in a very matter-of-fact way and added, "I'll remain there only for a short while and then come back to the station to catch a train for my next destination. If your charges are not unreasonable, I can engage you once again to bring my suitcase here."

"Well, Sir, we will decide that later. Kindly follow me," said the man.

The two reached Vidyasagar's house in a few minutes. Now it did not take long for the visitor to realize that the man who carried his suitcase was none other than the celebrated Vidyasagar. He stood terribly embarrassed. But Vidyasagar lovingly told him that one should not shirk doing physical work and one should also not stand on false prestige. Far from being a matter of indignity, it is a dignified habit to bear one's own burden, unless it is beyond one's capacity to do so.

The young man had learnt the lesson of his life. (MD)

AN UNUSUAL PRESCRIPTION

Mr. Lal went to a doctor and complained, "Doctor, I've a terrible cold! It's really making life hell for me. I've had enough of sniffing and sneezing. Please cure me fast!"

"I'll put you on a course of..." the doctor named a popular medicine for cold.

Mr. Lal immediately said, "Oh, that's no good, doctor! I've already tried that, and it didn't work!"

"Well, then, maybe you should try steam inhalation..."

"Oh, no, I tried that too! It's of no use."

"A course of native medicine might help. Make a decoction of *tulsi* leaves, pepper, and dried ginger..." The doctor was not allowed to finish. "What do you take me for, doctor? That was the first thing I tried when I felt the cold coming on! But it was no good!"

For a moment the doctor sat silent, lost in thought. Then, he brightened up. Turning to his patient, he said, "I have it! Go back home and treat yourself to two ice-creams and a chilled soft drink. Then, take a cold bath. Afterwards, sit in an AC room for two hours."

For once, Mr. Lal was dumbfounded! He goggled at the doctor in astonishment. Finally, he demanded, "Do you mean to say that this treatment will cure me?"

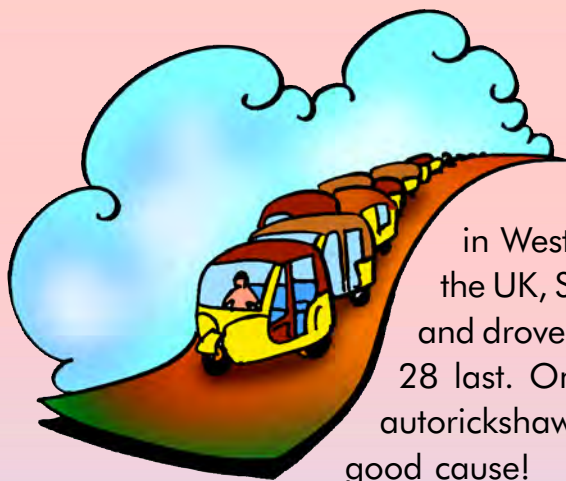
"Not straight away," answered the doctor nonchalantly. "But if you follow it, you'll get pneumonia – and I know how to treat it!"





NON-STOP SINGING

Akanksha Jachak began singing at Indore on her 16th birthday last November and stopped after 61 hours. She has earned an entry in the *Guinness Book of World Records*. Four musicians gave her 'vocal support' while her parents and friends, besides well-wishers gave her company on all the three days and nights. She sang both Marathi and Hindi songs. Also present were doctors who examined her at regular intervals. She avoided any food, and drank only lemon juice. The Madhya Pradesh Government has rewarded her with a cash award of Rs.1 lakh.



RICKSHAW RALLY

Thirty-five autorickshaws participated in a rally from Mattanchery in Cochin, Kerala, to Darjeeling in West Bengal. All the drivers were foreigners from the USA, the UK, Spain and Germany. They bought the brand new vehicles and drove the 3,000 km distance in 20 to 22 days from December 28 last. On the conclusion of the rally, they made a gift of the autorickshaws to unemployed young men in Darjeeling. A rally for a good cause!

ON A PEACE MISSION

A hundred and three women soldiers of the Indian Army are on a peace mission in Liberia from February, on a request by the United Nations. They are led by commander Seema Dhundy and accompanied by 22 male soldiers. Joining them in their mission are men of the Liberian National Police. This West African country had been going through a turbulent period for the last few years. The presence of the women soldiers from India has prompted local women to join the police force, according to the chief of the UN Peace-keeping Mission in Liberia.



KALEIDOSCOPE



TREES, OUR BEST FRIENDS



My best friend is the Mango tree in my garden. You won't believe it, but my tree can talk and also fly. One day I asked Mango: "Would you take me to the sky?" It said, "Sure". So, I went and sat on a branch, and swish! We were on a cloud in the sky. We went up to the Sun. As my tree gave out loads of oxygen, I did not die.

Then we went visiting the other planets in our solar system. Mercury is very hot, as it is the closest planet to the Sun. Venus and Earth are almost the same shape. Mango told me, they are called 'twin' planets. You see, my tree is very intelligent. It told me, Mars is the planet on which the biggest volcano had ever erupted, Mount Olympus. And so it is very red in colour. Jupiter is the largest. Saturn is so beautiful, I could hardly believe my eyes. My tree told me that the three rings I could see around it are made of ice-particles. Uranus, Neptune and Pluto are the same. I was afraid I would freeze!

So, we went back to a cloud. Then I felt very hungry. My tree offered me its mangoes. Some yum! Some yuck! Suddenly Mango said: "My flying power is over!" Suddenly it began to rain. Out came the rainbow. I said, "Let's slide down the rainbow." Weeeeeeee!!! We were back on Earth.

I hugged my tree and said, "You're not only my best friend, but a best friend to the whole mankind."

- Aradhana Parikh (10), Ahmedabad

ATTENTION: Contributors to Kaleidoscope are advised to send their complete postal addresses.



WHAT I LIKE

I like colours,
I like to paint with brush
Also do colouring with crayons.

I love to see green trees,
The blue sky full of
Twinkling stars.

I enjoy the beauty of the flowers,
Full moon's rays and raindrops.

The world is full of beautiful colours
One day I will put them all on my canvas.

I dream to be an artist in the future.

-Sidharth Rath (6), Hyderabad

DEAR MOTHER

O Mother!
You are so kind and sweet,
When I was mischievous, you would never
beat.

O Mother!
You told me what's good, what's bad,
You were the one who gifted me to Dad!

O Mother!
You brought me up with a lot of effort
And provided me with a lot of comfort.

O Mother!
You told me how to put in my effort sincerely,
You taught me everything very clearly.

O Mother!
You are the one I can ever worship!
Ours is an everlasting friendship!



O Mother!
You told me how to behave with friends and
others,
I feel you are the best among all mothers.

-P. Venktraju (12), Chennai



Teacher : What's the difference between elephants and houseflies?
 Student : Very simple. A housefly can sit on an elephant, but an elephant can't sit on a housefly!



Subhashini : Why do surgeons and nurses wear masks during an operation?

Durgaprasad : So that, if they make a mistake, no one will know who did it.

- **L.Bhanuprasad, Hyderabad**



Mohan : Dad, can you write in the dark?

Father : Yes, I think so. What do you want me to write?

Mohan : Your signature on my Report card.

- **G.M.Mithun (13), Hassan**



Patient (to Psychiatrist) : Doctor, I think I'm going mad.

Doctor : Really? What makes you think so?

Patient : I've started writing letters to myself!

Doctor : When did you write the last one?

Patient : Yesterday.

Doctor : And what does it say?

Patient : Ah! How could I know? I haven't received it yet!

- **S.Vanishree (13), Avadi**



Mother (angry with her son) : Johnny, why are you drawing on the wall?

Johnny : Mummy, didn't you say this is a drawing room?



Ram : I find a knot on your handkerchief! Who tied it?

Raju : My wife.

Ram : Why did she do it?

Raju : To remind me to post her letter.

Ram : And did you post it?

Raju : No, my wife forgot to give me the letter!



Two thieves were great friends. They met after some days and were exchanging news.

First thief : See this gold cup. I won it in a race.

Second thief : How many others were in the race?

First thief : Only two; they were behind me.

One was the owner and the other the policeman.

- **Susmit Chakraborty (13), Dhubri**



Conductor of a double-decker (to a villager):

There's no seat here, please go up.

Villager : I won't.

Conductor : Why?

Villager : The bus on top has no wheels.

- **B. Ragavi (12), Chennai**



CROSSWORD

Ten countries of the world are hidden in this 11x11 grid. You will find them horizontal as well as vertical-backward and upward!

S	L	B	R	A	Z	I	L	E	A	I
X	C	W	E	R	O	O	S	C	L	O
A	A	M	E	R	I	C	A	H	I	F
U	Y	G	D	E	T	E	O	I	A	T
S	C	E	W	E	S	F	R	N	E	J
T	K	R	I	N	D	I	A	A	K	A
R	E	M	R	R	C	R	I	K	O	P
A	T	A	A	K	F	A	N	N	R	A
L	F	N	Q	Z	D	N	L	I	E	N
I	D	Y	G	T	N	E	U	W	A	U
A	R	H	E	E	I	O	T	D	G	L

-Priyanka Maisnam (13), Imphal

RIDDLES

- Which is the most noisy game?
- Which fruit is mentioned most in history? -S.Akaash (12), Kolazy
- Which pet has no life?



-Arnab Ghosh (11), Kharagpur



- Imagine you are in a sinking boat, surrounded by sharks. What will you do?

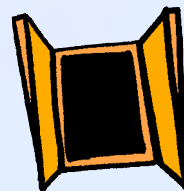
- For which fruit will you find gents rushing?

-P.M.Logaperumal (12), Chennai



- Which is the smallest room which we cannot enter?

-Monalisa Panda (12), Delhi



- Which animal becomes a divine being when it turns round?

-Sulagna Satpathy (9), Pandhada



- What will happen if you put a piece of wood in a pool?

-Karthik Bhushan (14), Udupi

- X is the father of Y and Z.

But Y and Z are not his



sons. How can this happen?

- A dhobi washes a shirt and puts it up for drying. It dries in 4 hours. If he puts 10 shirts to dry, how much time will it take?



-Ashuthosh Sunte (13), Belgaum

10. 4 hours.
wood will get wet, 9. Y and Z are his daughters,
5. Man-gol! 6. Mushroom, 7. DOG-GOD, 8. The
racket! 2. Dates, 3. Carpet, 4. Just stop imagining,
1. Tennis; you cannot be playing without raising a

ANSWERS TO RIDDLES:

A	R	H	E	E	I	O	T	D	G	L
I	D	Y	G	T	N	E	U	W	A	U
L	F	N	G	Z	D	N	L	I	E	N
A	T	A	A	K	F	A	N	R	A	A
R	E	M	R	R	C	R	I	K	O	P
T	K	R	I	N	D	I	A	A	K	A
S	C	E	W	E	S	F	R	N	E	J
U	Y	G	D	E	T	E	O	I	A	T
A	A	M	E	R	I	C	A	H	I	F
X	C	W	E	R	O	O	S	C	L	O
S	L	B	R	A	Z	I	L	E	A	I

SOLUTION TO CROSSWORD:

BOOK REVIEW

OF MONSTERS AND TIGERS

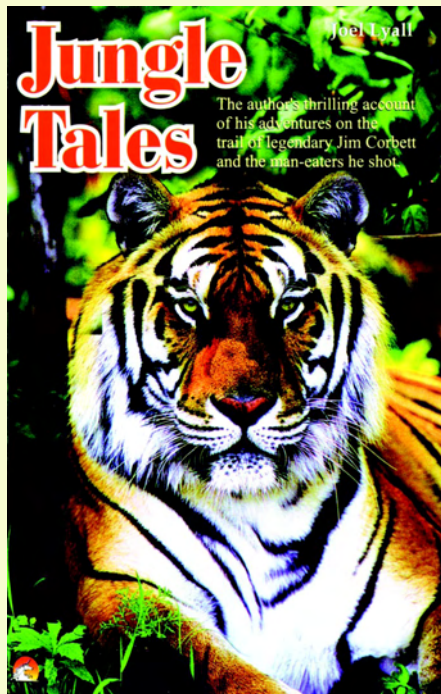
THE RED MONSTER by **Sudha Narasimhachar**,
and **JUNGLE TALES** by **Joel Lyall**,
both published by **Unicorn Books, New Delhi**

One of the cardinal rules advocated by experts in children's literature is that one must avoid 'preaching' to the young readers. The message or moral should never be explicitly stated, but should be subtly woven into the story for the readers to find out for themselves. However, this is one rule that debutant writer Sudha Narasimhachar has flouted, intentionally or unwittingly, in *The Red Monster* and other evocative tales.

All the stories have a didactic tone. While the morals themselves – charity, kindness to animals, love for nature, patriotism, religious tolerance, opposing child labour, and the like – are definitely praiseworthy, the attempt to thrust them down the reader's throat is not! That apart, the stories are well narrated. The Autobiography and The Oath, in particular, make interesting reading. The illustrations by Parijat Suman, if not outstanding, are adequate.



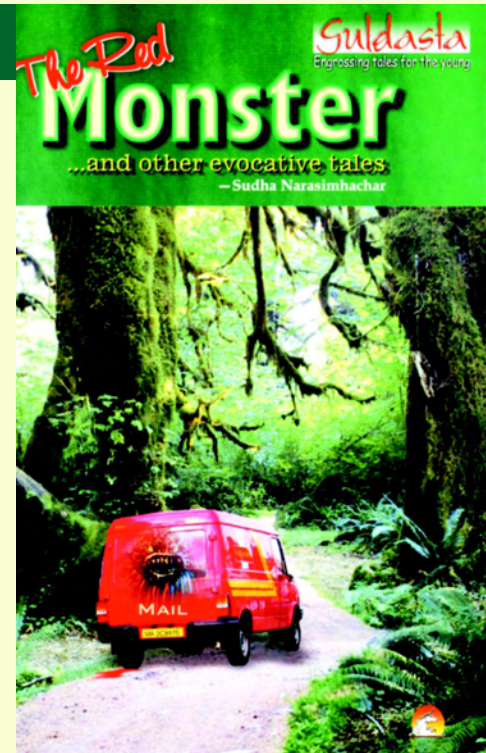
The wilds of present-day Uttarakhand have a thrilling history. This was where man-eating tigers and leopards reigned supreme until the legendary hunter, Jim Corbett, arrived to deliver the natives



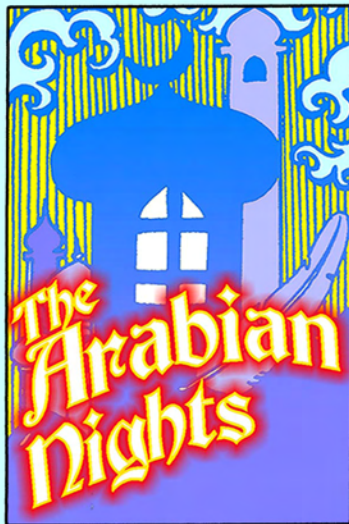
from their plight. In his book, Joel Lyall, journalist, nature-lover, and prolific writer on wildlife and ecology, follows Corbett's trail and takes the readers back into man-eater country. Apparently, Lyall was the first Indian journalist to have visited and photographed those remote places where the real action had taken place. His passion for nature and wildlife conservation is evident in his loving descriptions of the forests and of the simple, brave, and hospitable folk he encountered while travelling through the region. The photographs (taken by Lyall himself) that back up the gripping tales bear testimony to the painstaking research undertaken by the author.

The author warns, "If we fail to raise our voice at the depredation of forest and wildlife, our own survival on this planet will soon be in jeopardy." A telling argument, indeed! All told, the book puts together a convincing case against deforestation.

- Rajee Raman



THE ARABIAN NIGHTS



Ali was an honest trader of Sindah. He sold his merchandise fast as he never bargained with his customers. He always moved alone, though he had many friends.



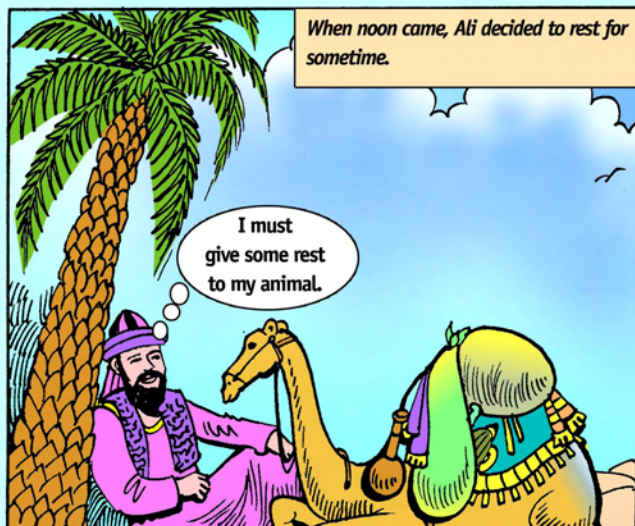
Ali was happy with whatever little profit he made.



The city had two cheats. They traded in cheap wares.



When noon came, Ali decided to rest for sometime.



The cheats accosted Ali.



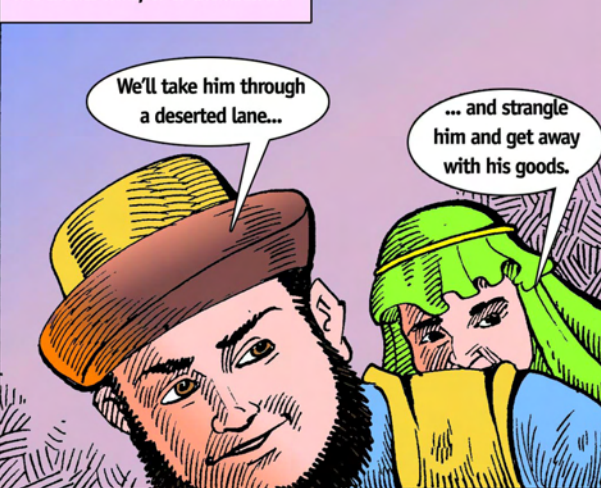
MINDS THAT WORKED ALIKE



By evening, they reached a bazaar.



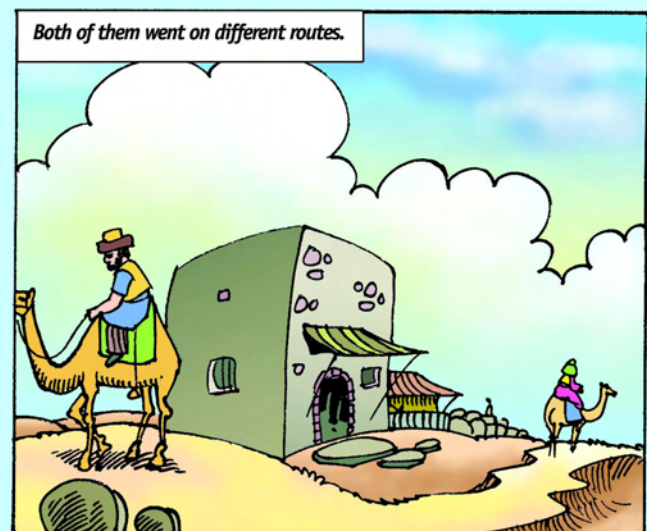
The cheats whisper to themselves.



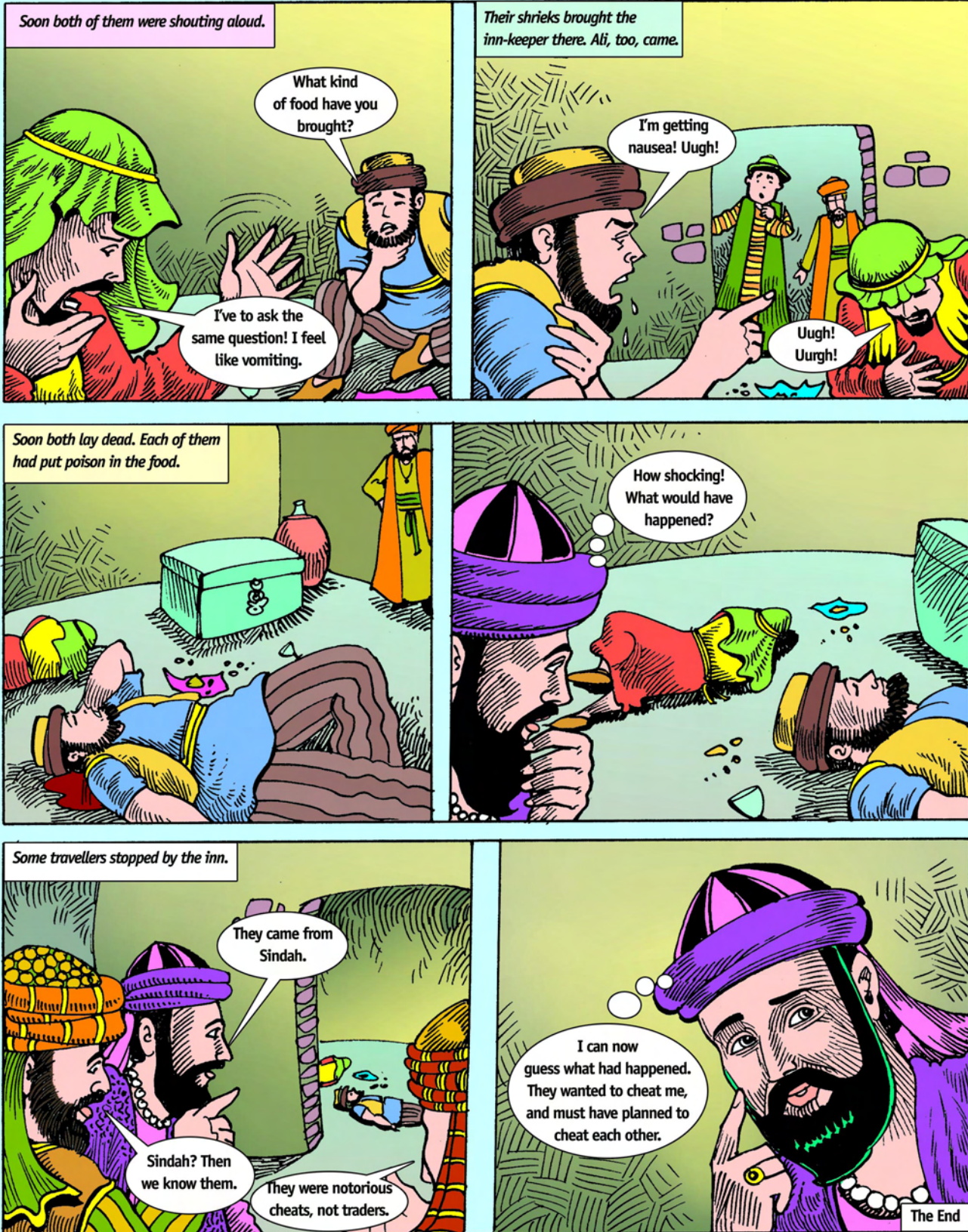
Ali declined their invitation.



THE ARABIAN NIGHTS



MINDS THAT WORKED ALIKE



NAILING DOWN THE TRUTH



Many were the disputes brought to the Royal Court for settlement. Emperor Akbar handled most of the cases himself. Occasionally he needed help to find a just decision. He would then turn to Birbal. He had the skill of a detective and always managed to get to the root of the matter.

One day, the Emperor was holding Court. A merchant, who owned a major outlet for ghee, entered. He bowed, stood up and waited for the Royal nod.

"Who are you?" the Emperor asked.

"*Shahenshah!* I'm Madhusudan Pande. I sell ghee."

"What brings you here?"

"*Alampana*, a month back, one of my friends, Aslam Khan, who too owns a ghee shop, approached me for a loan of twenty mohars. He said he had run short of ready

cash. He promised to return the amount in a fortnight. I lent him the amount. But he has not returned it so far."

"Did you ask him for the amount?" asked the Emperor, leaning forward.

"*Alampana*, I did. I've asked him many times. Initially he said he needed more time to repay the loan. Today morning, when I asked him, he said he never took any loan from me. He said he had never felt the need to take a loan from anyone at any time."

"Is he rich?"

"Yes, *Shahenshah*. But even the rich sometimes run short of ready cash and take loans," the merchant explained.

"Did you take a receipt for the amount lent?" the Emperor asked.

"No, *Alampana*. I trusted him."

"So it is your word against his?" the Emperor's voice was sharp and tangy.

"*Shahenshah!* I'm telling the truth. I swear in the name of Lord Ram," the merchant sighed.

"If you speak the truth, you'll get back your money," the Emperor curtly waved his hand, signaling that the merchant should leave.

"Birbal," the Emperor turned to the courtier.

"*Shahenshah*," Birbal stood up and bowed.

"Will you look into this matter?"

In the evening, Birbal sent for Madhusudan Pande and made him repeat his complaint.

"In money matters, Pande ji, it is always advisable to have documentary proof," said Birbal.

"I had known Aslam Khan for more than twenty years. So I believed him," Madhusudan Pande spoke in a low tone.

He pleaded "Please make that man repay the loan."

"I will, if your story is true," Birbal was cautious.

"Trust me. I'm telling the truth," the merchant repeated.



“Trust not beyond limits, Pande ji. It is time you learnt that lesson,” Birbal sent him off with the assurance that he would receive justice.

Birbal sent for Aslam Khan. Soon a tall well-dressed man walked in. “*Salaam-alai kum*,” he bowed politely. “I’m Aslam Khan. Can I be of service to you, Huzoor?”

“*Alai kum Salaam*, Aslam Khan. Sorry for the inconvenience I caused by asking you to meet me. Please be seated,” Birbal was polite and courteous.

“Thank you,” Aslam Khan grinned.

“Aslam Khan ji, I have received a complaint against you.”

“Against me? O Birbal ji! I have never given anyone room for any complaint. I’m an honest man. I make enough to keep my family in comfort through my business. I pay my taxes regularly. Not once have I been involved in any criminal act. So, who could have any complaint against me?” Aslam Khan behaved as if he was taken aback.

Birbal detailed the complaint filed by Madhusudan Pande and held in the pocket of his jacket, pulled it out and handed it over to Aslam Khan.

“Why should I borrow money from Pande ji? I’ve enough landed property. I’ve a house of my own. I make a tidy profit from my business. Why should I borrow money? Pande ji is telling a lie,” Aslam Khan turned to Birbal.

“Maybe,” Birbal scratched his chin. “Or may not be. Only God knows,” Birbal peered at Aslam Khan, as if he was trying to read his mind. “It’s your word against his. And both of you are well-known merchants in the town,” he paused.

“Allah has given me enough. I don’t need to borrow from anyone,” Aslam Khan repeated his defence.

“Well,” Birbal changed the subject quickly giving the impression that he had just remembered something important. He held Aslam Khan by the arm and said, “Will you do me a favour?”

“At your command, O Birbal ji,” Aslam Khan smiled.

“A month ago, I sent word to a friend in my village to send me a tin of pure ghee. He has sent me two. I don’t know what to do with the second tin. I don’t want to keep it. Ghee is tasty only when fresh,” Birbal waited for



Aslam Khan’s response. “I can sell it for you and send you the cash,” Aslam Khan replied.

“That makes sense,” Birbal chuckled.

“I’m glad to be of service to you, O Noble Sire,” Aslam Khan purred.

“Thank you. I shall send the tin of ghee to you tomorrow,” Birbal saw him off with a warm hug.

Next day, Birbal called on Madhusudan Pande.

“I would have come, if you had sent word,” Pande welcomed him.

“Pande ji, I need your help. A month ago, I sent word to a friend in my village to send me a tin of pure ghee. He has sent me two. I don’t know what to do with the second tin. I don’t want to keep it. Ghee is tasty only when fresh. Can you sell it on my behalf?” Birbal waited.

“Why not? Shall I come and collect it?”

“No. My man will bring it to you some time today afternoon,” Birbal thanked him and took leave of Madhusudan Pande.

The tins of ghee were delivered to the two merchants at noon the same day.

Birbal was watering the plants in front of his house when Madhusudan Pande rushed in. He was panting for breath. He took time to regain his breath. He greeted Birbal and said, taking deep breaths, "I found a gold mohar in the tin. And here is the money I got by selling the ghee."

"Ah, a gold mohar in the ghee tin! I think today is my lucky day," Birbal laughed heartily.

"Birbal ji, what about my complaint?" the merchant hesitated.

"I'm making enquiries. Give me time till tomorrow."

Next morning, Aslam Khan presented himself before Birbal. "*Salaam alai kum*," he greeted Birbal.

"*Alai kum salaam*," Birbal smiled.

"Huzoor, here is the money I collected by selling the ghee," Aslam Khan handed over the money.

"Thank you," Birbal grinned.

"I'm glad I could be help to you. You must be awfully busy. Till we meet again," Aslam Khan got ready to leave.

"Oh my God! I forgot! I shall be with you right away," Birbal raced down the steps of his house. Aslam Khan waited at the veranda. He saw Birbal talking to a servant. He could not hear what was being said. Nor did he bother. He looked happy with himself. If he had heard what Birbal told the servant, he would not have been so smug and confident.

"Go to Aslam Khan's house. Tell his son that his father wants him to bring the gold mohar which he found in the tin," Birbal told the servant.

The servant hurried out. Birbal joined Aslam Khan. He held the merchant back by enquiring about business matters.

The talks continued till the servant returned, leading a little boy of ten. The boy ran to his father, holding a gold mohar, saying, "Here it is, Abbaji. The gold mohar we found in the tin of ghee."

"You fool, whoever has heard of gold mohar in a ghee tin?" he cut the boy short.

"Abbaji, when we heated the ghee and transferred it to another container, . . ."

"I bent and a gold mohar fell off the folds of my cloth," Aslam Khan silenced the boy with a stern glance and turned to Birbal with his explanation.

"Aslam Khan, the boy told the truth. For I had put a cold mohar in the tin," Birbal lowered his voice.

Aslam Khan turned pale. But he got over his fright, almost instantly, held Birbal by the arm and said, "Ah! I thought the coin had fallen off the folds of my dress. Perhaps I was mistaken. Here, Huzoor, is the coin. Take it." Aslam Khan handed the gold mohar and got ready to leave.

"Well, my friend, what about the 100 gold mohars you borrowed from Madhusudan Pande?"

"I owe him nothing," Aslam Khan replied.

"That is a lie. Out with the truth, this moment. Or you go to the cellar," Birbal quivered with rage.

Aslam Khan realized that his game was up. "I'm sorry, Huzoor. I shall return the gold mohars I owe Madhusudan Pande." He fell at Birbal's feet and begged for pardon.

- R.K.Murthi



CASTAWAY BY CHOICE!



As the night was slowly unfolding into a fine spring day in the year 1951, the phone rang in the young doctor's home. He was being urgently called to the hospital. At once he hurried towards the hospital, thinking all the way what might have gone wrong. A shipwreck had occurred near the coast of his town, Boulogne-sur-mer in France. The youth later sadly recollected, "I shall never forget the terrible spectacle of those forty-three men piled on top of one another, like dislocated puppets, their feet bare, and each still wearing a lifebelt. In spite of all our efforts we failed to revive a single one. An error of navigation lasting a few moments had caused forty-three deaths and orphaned seventy-eight children."

'If only something could be done to avoid such disasters!' the youth earnestly thought. From that

day, the word "shipwreck" became for him "the very expression of human misery, a synonym for despair, hunger and thirst". He remembered how on 2nd July, 1816 the frigate, *La Meduse*, perilously struck a sandbank off the African coast. There were almost four hundred sailors on board. Only fifteen survived and of them some died soon after, while some others went completely mad. Then, on April 15, 1912 took place one of the worst tragedies in maritime history. The colossal *Titanic* collided against an iceberg and sank with great loss of life. Around fifteen hundred people perished and out of the number of survivors many became insane.

Couldn't those shipwrecked linger on in the mid-ocean till rescue came? Most of them died much sooner out of despair and fright than it normally would have taken them to perish of hunger and thirst. "To hope is to seek better things. The survivor of a shipwreck, deprived of everything, must never lose hope. The simple and brutal problem confronting him is that of death or survival. He will need to bolster his courage with all his resources and all his faith in life to fight off despair," said the doctor. Only if he could give them courage, strength and hope! But how?

This young man was none other than Alain Bombard, born in Paris on October 27, 1924. While still a boy he quickly developed a love for the sea and especially navigation. He studied medicine, psychology and marine biology. Later, on completing his education he began working at a hospital in Boulogne. Now he straightaway embarked upon his new adventure. He carried out detailed studies, browsed through records of shipwrecks and talked to survivors. Before long he was all set to act as a voluntary castaway and sail on a long voyage across the ocean with no provisions of food and water.



Ve...



“He’s a crackpot!” laughed all those who came to know of his foolhardy project. Many scientists, too, took his ideas as wild. “Crazy! How can he ever think of surviving in the sea without fresh water and food?” they wondered.

But that did not discourage the brave and the so-called foolish doctor. He was confident that the ocean’s bounty would provide him with everything that is required to sustain his body. Drinking large quantities of salt water might prove fatal but a few sips suitably diluted could be beneficial. He discovered that fresh fish contained fifty to eighty per cent of usable water which was also salt-free. So a catch of about seven pounds of fish would be enough for the day’s water requirement. The fish, too, would provide him with protein and fat and the vital vitamins and carbohydrates would come from planktons, millions of microscopic creatures, algae and weed usually found on the surface of the sea.

They are in fact the principal food of the whales, the largest living mammals. Indeed, a balanced healthy diet he would have!

October 19, 1952 was a fine day. The intrepid Alain Bombard was given a rousing send off. He set sail on his unique adventure in an inflatable rubber dinghy named *The Heretic*. He planned to cross the great Atlantic Ocean and follow one of the routes of Columbus from the Canaries via Cape Verde Islands to Barbados in the West Indies. He was indeed risking his own life in order to save the lives of sailors who might be shipwrecked in future. Would he succeed in his noble mission?

The little boat slowly drifted into a calm sea without a breath of breeze. He failed to catch any fish in the first couple of days. So he was forced to drink the daily allowance of sea water to quench his thirst. One night the wind suddenly blew with the force of a gale and a giant wave toppled the dinghy. Only her inflated floats were visible above water and the rest had become part of the sea. Like a wreck the little craft still continued on its ambitious course, while her master made frantic efforts to drain the water with his hat before the next onslaught of the colossal body of water. Thus the tussle continued with the elements for two long hours before there was some respite as the storm gradually died down.

Some time passed. He was just settling down to get back his breath when a sudden gust tore the little sail apart. Luckily he had a spare one and at once he raised it up. Alas, another blast of wind soon whipped it off and sent it away flying like a kite. He now had no option left but to mend the torn sail, hoping that the stitches would hold on till the end of his journey.

He caught many fish, including the flying ones that landed on the deck. They provided him with his food and drink though he did not like the taste of them. One day a big bird called the shearwater pounced on the bait of his fishing line hanging in the air over the edge of the boat. He caught it and, as he was hungry, ate one half and left the other half on the deck for drying in the sun. At night through his tent he saw a ghostly bluish white glimmer of light. Was it a spirit from the vast deep? Or had something caught fire? Nervously he peeped out only to find that the remaining part of the bird was giving out a strong phosphorescent glow that reflected on the sail.

To his dismay, one day his watch stopped and from then on he had to keep track of the time from the movement of the sun and the moon. Wherever he looked there was nothing but the sea and the sky. He felt like a mere speck in this vast expanse of water. He was indeed feeling very lonely, and solitude seemed to be wearing him down. He was part of a strange and silent world. "It was a vast presence which engulfed me," he described. "Its spell could not be broken, any more than the horizon could be brought nearer. And if from time to time I talked aloud in order to hear my own voice, I only felt more and more alone, a hostage to silence." Will he be able to conquer his loneliness or become mad like many shipwrecked men?

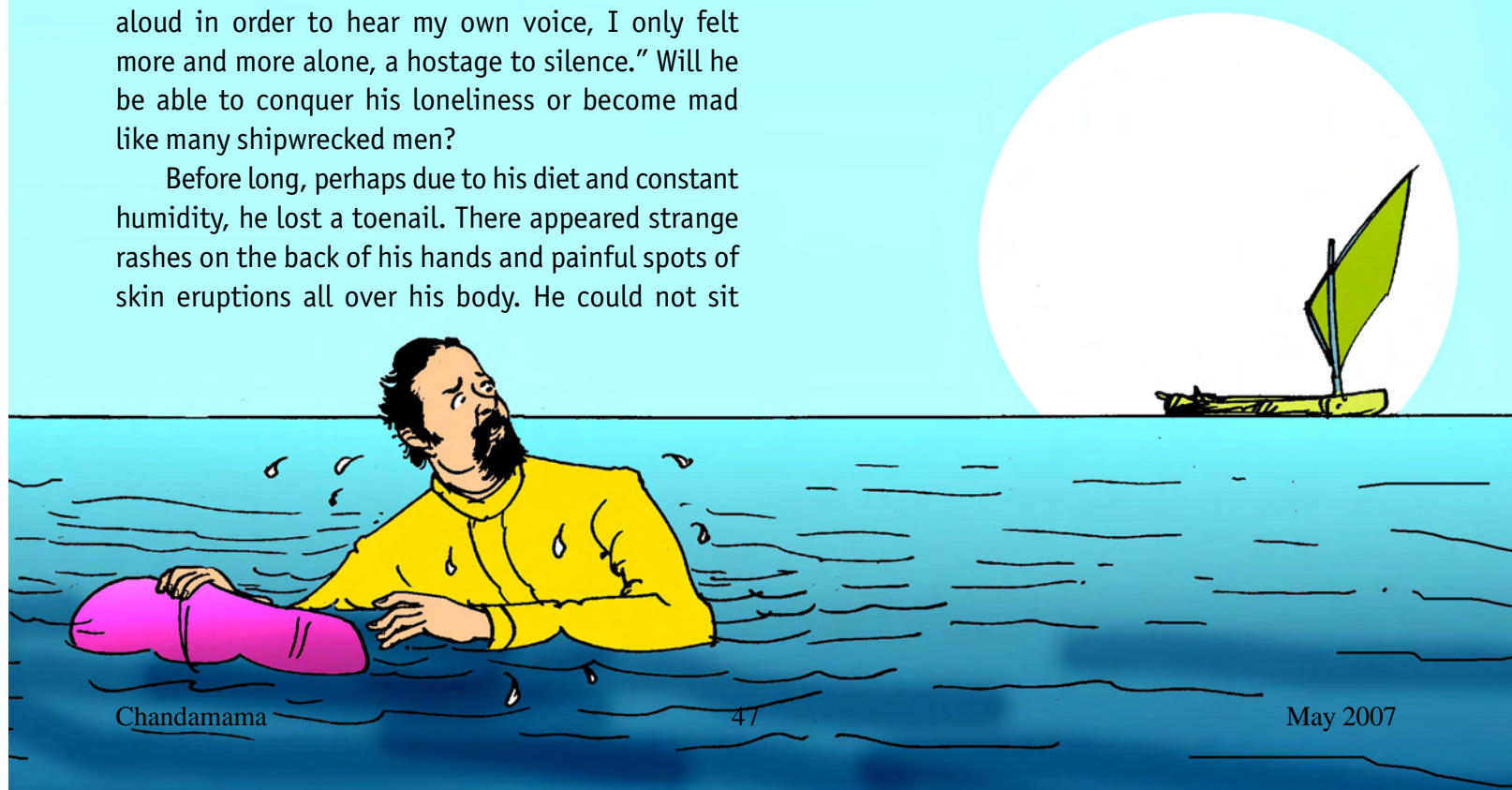
Before long, perhaps due to his diet and constant humidity, he lost a toenail. There appeared strange rashes on the back of his hands and painful spots of skin eruptions all over his body. He could not sit

down for long and it became more and more difficult to find a comfortable position. He had a small air cushion on which he found it convenient to rest his weight on.

One morning it so happened that by chance the air pillow got knocked overboard and was seen floating about two hundred yards away from the rear of the boat. Lowering his sail and putting out the sea anchor, Alain Bombard dived in to fetch it. He was a powerful swimmer and reached it in no time. But when he turned round, he saw to his dismay his little boat gleefully sailing off. The speed seemed to be too fast for him to even catch up with her. It now looked as if his dinghy would cross the Atlantic without him. What had gone wrong? The sea anchor, usually shaped like a parachute had, for reasons unknown, jammed and entangled itself and could no longer arrest the vessel's drift.

So, with a supreme effort the brave castaway swam as fast as his weak limbs allowed him. Can he recover his little boat? But she was speeding farther and farther away. Everything seemed to be lost. However, to his joy and amazement the craft miraculously slowed down. Soon he captured it.

A group of friendly dolphins faithfully followed



the dinghy twenty-four hours. A tiny black with a white-tipped tail paid him a daily visit without fail exactly at four in the afternoon. He had several encounters with dangerous sword and ray fish. Occasionally whales, too, curiously swam round and under the craft. One night an ominous and hungry-looking shark appeared determined to have him for a meal. It gave up a good fight but Bombard finally managed to kill it.

One day rains came down to his great joy. He got drenched and drank the rain-water to his heart's content. It was like nectar to him. But the rigours of the journey were having their toll on his health. There were boils all over his body. He watched strips of skin peeling from his feet and nails from four of his toes dropping off in three days. He also suffered from a violent form of diarrhoea lasting for fourteen days. It completely wore him down. He had on deck a sealed box of emergency medicines. But he was now a castaway and he wanted to remain so for as long as he could bear his painful ailments. Otherwise how could he prove his point?

In his log book which he meticulously maintained, he wrote: "Visited today by a butterfly. Also saw a gossamer thread floating in the air, such as spider's spin on land. Surely, after that land cannot be far away." Day after day went by and yet there was no sign of land. He was baffled and knew not where he was. "God, what can I do to end this terrible uncertainty?" he prayed.

As the sun rose over a calm ocean the following day, he saw to his delight a ship sailing by. Its captain shouted at the top of his voice, "May we help you?"

"Please tell me Sir, the time, the day and my exact position," asked the solitary sailor.

When he got the answers to his queries he was stunned beyond belief. Still six hundred miles were left to reach his destination and fifty-three days have already passed since he started his journey. Will he be able to make it to the end now? The kind captain proposed to take him and his little boat on board his ship. Alain Bombard almost agreed to the

very tempting invitation but decided otherwise and continued on his bizarre journey.

On the eve of Christmas, 23rd December, 1952 the local natives were surprised to see a shrunken man staggering ashore on the beach of Barbados in the West Indies. "Who could be this stranger?" they wondered! After sixty-five days of gruelling ordeal, Alain Bombard had become almost fifty-five pounds lighter, but was alive. Later in life he received many letters from sailors who had managed to survive in the sea from near- death situations taking inspiration from his most amazing adventure which he has wonderfully recounted in his book *The Bombard Story*.

Alain Bombard zealously continued his research work, taught, lectured and set up a marine laboratory. He also joined politics and avidly championed the cause of the environment. On the 50th anniversary of his epic voyage, while replying to an interviewer, he said: "I had fought on behalf of men against the sea, but I realise that it has become more urgent to fight on behalf of the sea against men."

He died on July 19, 2005 at the age of eighty in a southern town of France. (AKD)





FROM HARYANA

A FOREST OF BLUE FLOWERS

Parmanand led a lonely life as he had lost his parents when he was young and he was their only child. He preferred to live on the edge of a forest, as he liked the company of birds and flowering trees. He mostly ate fruits, roots of some plants, and the leaves of certain trees which he found edible. Rarely did he catch birds—but very rarely.

One day he had kept a trap for birds. After sometime he found a beautiful wild parrot inside the net. He took it out and began stroking its feathers. He was surprised when the bird began to speak : “If you won’t kill me or sell me in the market, you’ll meet with good fortune.”

Parmanand replied: “Tell me what you want me to do to enjoy the good fortune you promise me?”

“Take me to the king and let me do the talking,” said the parrot.

“I shall,” said Parmanand. He found his way to the palace and presented himself before the king, parrot in hand.

The king exclaimed, “Now, that’s a beautiful bird!” He called an attendant and asked him to fetch Princess Motirani. When she came, the king said, “Rani, would you like to keep this bird?”

The princess, of course, was delighted. “Yes, father, I shall look after it well.”

The king turned to Parmanand. “Well, young man, how much do you want for the bird?”

He took some time to respond as he had been taken up by the beauty of the princess.

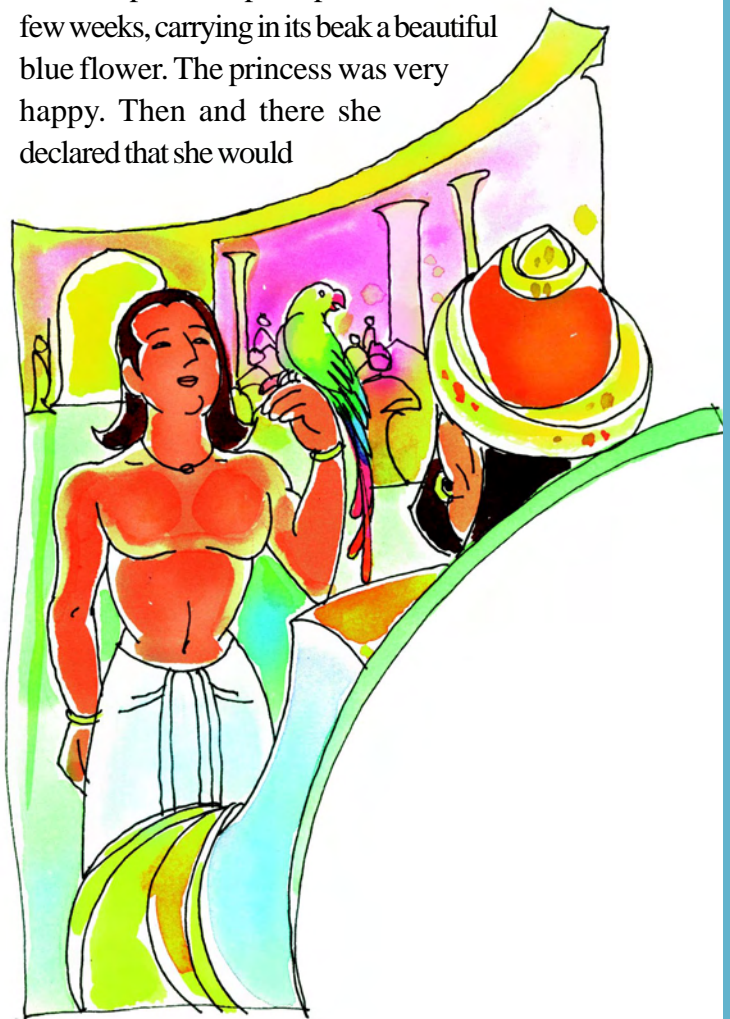
The parrot took that opportunity to speak. “A thousand coins,” it said.

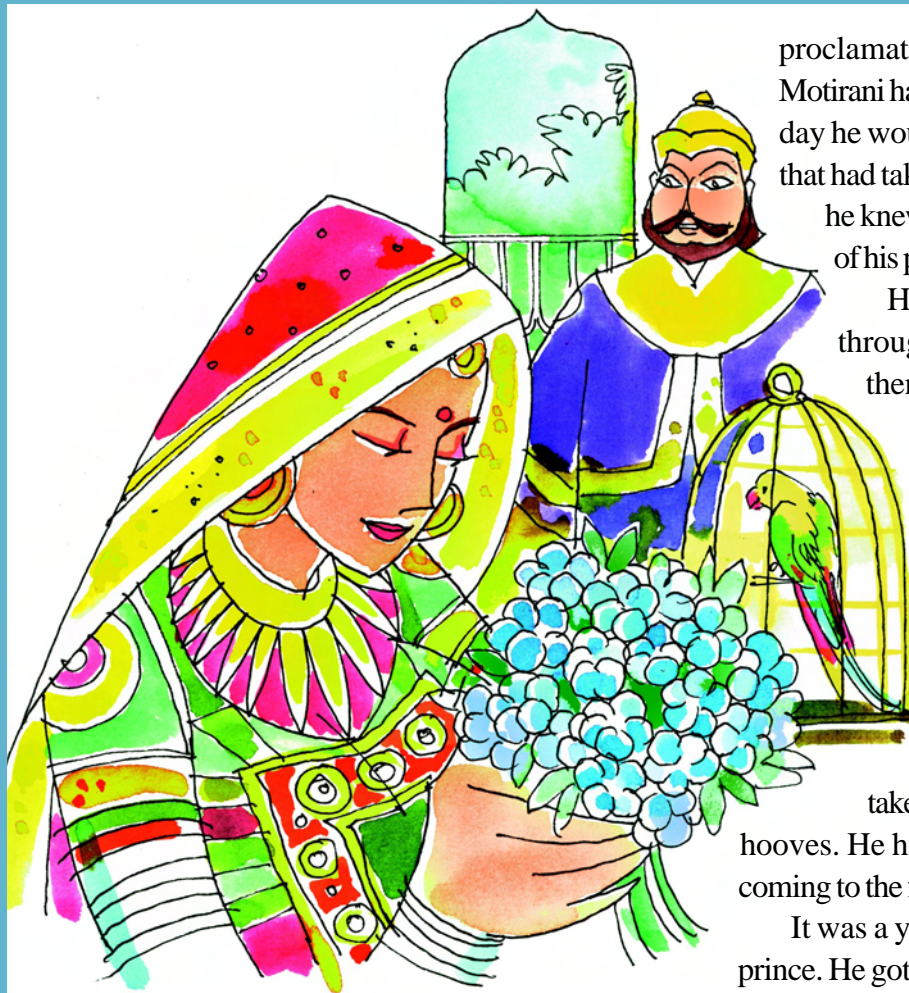
Everybody in the court was surprised over how the parrot talked so fluently. The king made the royal treasurer count the coins. He handed over the pouch to the king,

who then gave it to Parmanand. After he left, the king and the princess listened to the parrot’s talk for sometime before the princess took the parrot to her apartments. The next day, a golden cage was made for the parrot.

A few days later, the parrot told the princess: “Please allow me to return to my home for a while. I promise I shall come back. I’ll even bring a present for you.” Princess Motirani reluctantly agreed. She remained at the window watching the parrot fly away.

The parrot kept its promise. It came back after a few weeks, carrying in its beak a beautiful blue flower. The princess was very happy. Then and there she declared that she would





marry whoever brought a whole bunch of the same flower, if not a tree itself.

The king was shocked when he was told of the princess's decision. He pleaded with the princess : "Motirani, my dear, many princes have already asked for your hand, and they are all handsome and brave. Just imagine if a hunter wandering in the forests were to come upon the flower and manage to bring a tree. Would you then marry him? Remember, he'll have to succeed me on the throne."

The king found that the princess would not easily change her mind. He made a proclamation, hoping that one of the princes among the suitors would succeed in finding the tree that grows the blue flower the princess had fallen in love with. Some of them did search for the tree and the flower far and wide and came back and told the king that it was just an idle fancy of the princess and she would soon forget all about the flower.

Meanwhile, Parmanand, too, had heard the

proclamation. Somehow, the beautiful Princess Motirani had caught his fancy and he dreamt that one day he would marry her. After all, it was his parrot that had taken the exotic flower to the princess. And he knew every forest, every jungle like the back of his palm.

He walked for several days, over hills and through forests, across fields and rivers. And then, one day as he stood on top of a hill, he saw below a whole forest of the blue flower. He remained there for some time enjoying the sight. Then he started climbing down.

When he reached the forest, he thought he should find out in whose kingdom he was standing and whether he would get permission to pluck a bunch of flowers, if not cut down a plant and take it to Princess Motirani. He heard a horse's hooves. He hid behind a huge tree to see who it was coming to the forest.

It was a young man; he was not looking like any prince. He got down from the horse, moved among the trees and sat down under the shade of a tree. He looked sad. Parmanand approached him. "Would you tell me to which kingdom I have come to?"

It was only then the young man noticed that he was not alone. "This is the Kingdom of the Flowering Forest. Who are you and what brought you here?" queried the young man.

"My name is Parmanand. I came here in search of the blue flower and I find a whole forest full of the blue flower. But, friend, why are you looking sad?"

"I'll tell you my story. The king had a beautiful daughter. She possessed a special gift. Whenever she came here, the birds sang. She was so gentle that whenever she touched the buds, they blossomed. My father was the king's minister, and when we were children, Princess Neelmani and I used to play together. When we grew up, we decided to marry each other. But, the king wanted her to marry a wealthy merchant. However, Neelmani told him that she would not marry anyone other

than her childhood friend me. The king was angry with her. At that time a magician was visiting him. On the pretext of giving her a golden complexion, he sat her around a fire. In the glow of the flames, he turned the princess into a golden nail. "If you heat the nail in a fire, your daughter will get back her life," the magician told the king before he went away.

"What happened to the golden nail?" Parmanand asked of the young man.

"The king had been so angry with the princess that he had the nail hammered into one of the trees here. This I came to know from one of her companions in the palace. Days have gone by. I have ever since been coming here every day, searching for the tree on which the nail had been hammered into. I haven't succeeded. I'm told the king is repenting now. If I retrieve the nail, I shall take it to him and bring back the princess to life. I'm sure he'll then agree to our marriage."

"I shall help you in searching for the tree and the nail," said Parmanand.

"But how? I haven't left out any tree, and I couldn't find it till now," said the young man.

"May I suggest something?" said Parmanand. "Let's come here in the night."

"That's a good idea. I had never thought of it. Come with me now," said the young man.

Late in the evening, they returned to the forest. The young man had taken a dagger with him. The two began looking at every tree. Suddenly, Parmanand exclaimed: "Friend, see that! Something is glittering in the moonlight. It must be the nail."

The minister's son took out his dagger and began chopping around the object. Soon, the nail came into view. In no time, he could pierce it out of the tree. The golden nail looked intact. "We'll meet the king early tomorrow and hand over the nail."

Next morning, they went to the palace and sought an audience with the king. His joy knew no bounds when the minister's son placed the golden nail in

his hands. He introduced Parmanand to the king as the one who had helped him find the nail. The king ordered a fire to be raised. When the flames rose, with great expectations and excitement, he himself threw the nail into the flames. Nothing happened till the flames died down. Suddenly, from the embers emerged Neelmani as she looked when she was the princess. She caught hold of her father's extended hand, and came out of the embers, looking like a golden beauty.

The king lost no time in announcing the wedding of Princess Neelmani with the minister's son. He turned to Parmanand. "What reward can I give you, my friend?"

Parmanand then revealed how he had come there in search of the blue flower. "Why do you want to take only a bunch of them?" the king asked. "Take a whole tree. The princess will be very happy."

Parmanand was duly escorted and when he reached the palace, he called on Princess Motirani and her father. Without wasting time, the tree was planted in the royal garden much to the delight of the princess. The king agreed to her wedding with Parmanand.



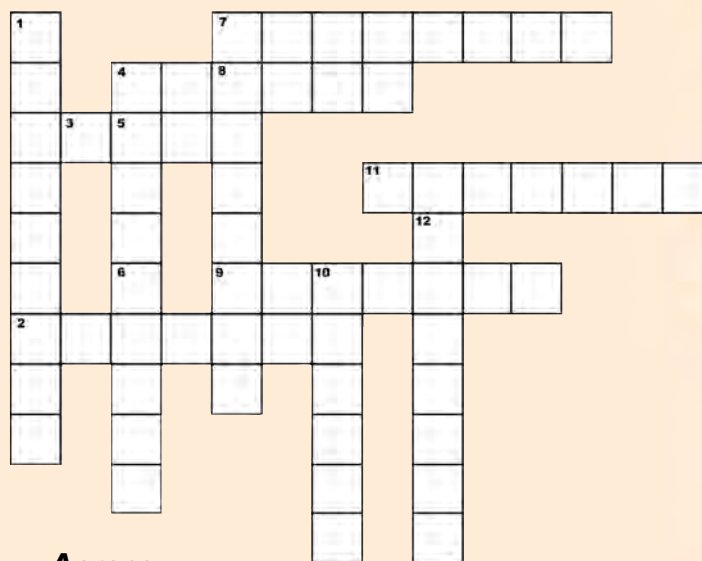
PUZZLE DAZZLE

CROSSWORD ON SCHOOL AND STUDIES



You must be enjoying your summer vacation. If you have not already forgotten 'school' and 'studies', here's something to remind you of both

during your holidays. Use the clues to solve the crossword.



Down:

1. The study of the earth's surface; includes people's responses to topography and climate and soil and vegetation (9).
5. Another name for TEST – First half (4).
6. Ramanujam was a genius in this field (5).
8. The person who teaches students (7).
10. Everyone goes to this place to learn (6).
12. The scientific study of animals and their habits and habitats (7).

Across:

2. Schools start with worship – another name (6).
3. Useful instrument for writing (3).
4. It is a branch of biology which deals with the scientific study of Plants (6).
7. An electronic device for the storage and processing of information (8).
9. It refers to the study and interpretation of the record of human societies (7).
11. Students can be identified by their ——— (7).

- by R Vaasugi

SALE OF A HOUSE

Ms. Rani purchased a house for Rs 40 lakh. She wants to sell it for a profit of exactly 20 per cent. However, she does not want to sell it herself. She wants a Real Estate Agent to sell it for her. The Agent must make a commission of exactly 5 per cent (in addition to Ms. Rani's 20 per cent profit). How much should the Agent sell the house for?

SALE OF A HOUSE ANSWER:

The agent must sell the house for Rs 50 lakh to get his commission Rs 2 lakh.

SOLUTION TO CROSSWORD:

Down: 1. Geography; 5. Exam; 6. Maths; 8. Teacher; 10. School; 12. Zoology.

Across: 2. Prayer; 3. Pen; 4. Botany; 7. Computer; 9. History; 11. Uniform.

BUDDHA JAYANTI

The word Jayanti means anniversary, like Gandhi Jayanti on October 2 marking the birth anniversary of the Father of the Nation. In the case of Buddha Jayanti, it is the anniversary of three important events in the Buddha's life. He was born as Prince Siddhartha of Kapilavastu on a full moon night in Vaisakha, the second month in the Hindu calendar, in the 6th century B.C.

Till the age of 29, the prince was not aware of the miseries of everyday life, like pain, illness, infirmity and death, as his father, King Shuddhodana, ensured that Siddhartha led a sheltered life. One day, when the prince was taken out in procession, for the first time he chanced upon people suffering. This set him to think that he should seek the true meaning of life.

One night, he left the palace and wandered for eight years. Ultimately, in a place called Bodh Gaya, in present day Bihar, as he sat in meditation under a pipal tree, he got enlightenment.

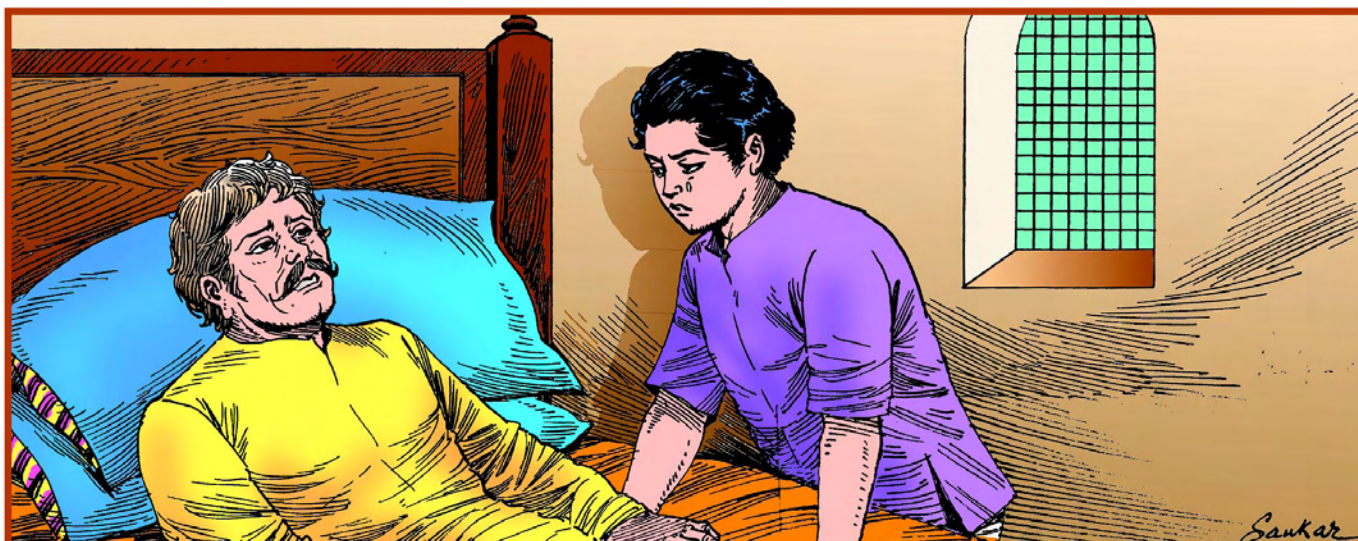
The day was a full moon day in Vaisakha. He then started on his wanderings once again spreading his teachings among the people. In his 80th year, the Buddha attained salvation—once again it was a full moon day in Vaisakha. Buddha Jayanti is, therefore, also known as Buddha Purnima (full moon).

Followers of Buddhism from all over the world congregate at Bodh Gaya to join the celebrations, the highlights of which are prayer meetings, religious discourses, recitation from Buddhist scriptures, group meditation and taking out processions. Pilgrims also visit other hallowed places like Sarnath in Uttar Pradesh.

This year Buddha Jayanti falls on May 2.



The first *Vatsalya Award*, instituted by the Padma Binani Foundation, has been conferred on the well-known Hindi writer for children, Dr. Harikrishna Devsare. Author of more than 300 books for children, Dr. Devsare was editor of the Hindi children's magazine *Parag* for several years. He encouraged creativity in children's literature and successfully tried his hand at science fiction and one-act plays. Children's books in 22 languages published in 2006 were examined before Dr. Devsare was nominated for the award.



INSPIRATION FOR CHARITY

Ramlal was a trader who had risen from poverty to reach riches. When he was about to take his last breath, he called his son aside and said, "Kishan, my son! Though I had earned enough money and amassed wealth, I have not spent much for charity. I wish that a *dharamshala* be built in my name for the benefit of pilgrims who come on a holy trip to our temple town. I entrust the responsibility to you. Spend half of my wealth towards constructing the *dharamshala*, and you keep the remaining half for yourself. I hope you would fulfil this my last wish." Soon afterwards, Ramlal died.

Kishanlal was about to start work on the *dharamshala*, when his young and ambitious wife said, "Are you a fool? It may be your father's last wish! Yet, where's the hurry to fulfil it right now? Listen to me! Let us start a new business jointly! Right now we shall utilize the entire wealth investing in our business. At the end of the year, after we reap a handsome profit, we can put up a *choultry* from out of the profit. Thus, we can kill two birds in a single shot."

Kishanlal was a bit reluctant, but he gave in ultimately to her persuasion. After a year, when

the business yielded rich dividends, Kishanlal wanted to start work on the *choultry*. Again, his wife interfered. "Look! The profit we've made is only marginal. I can't allow you to siphon out the entire profit in the name of charity. We might get a better profit next year. We shall then think about the *choultry*!"

So, he could not do anything against her wish. Next year, they reaped a higher profit than they had anticipated. Yet, his wife was still reluctant to utilize the profit for building the *choultry*. "Listen! Let's reinvest the entire profit and expand our business! What's the hurry for charity now? It's something to think of in old age. After all, charity begins at home. Only after fending for all our needs should we ever think of charity!"

Kishanlal meekly agreed to her reasoning. Subsequently, though they amassed a huge fortune in their business, his wife did not allow him to go ahead with charity, raising one objection or other.

One day, when Kishanlal was relaxing in his house, he happened to see a blind man trotting on the road with the help of a stick and carrying



90 per cent of women who walk into a department store immediately turn to the right.

DID YOU KNOW?

We human beings are about 1cm taller in the morning than in the evening. Layers of cartilage in the joints get compressed during the day.



a bowl in his hand. Suddenly, he tripped and fell down. At once, a man came limping to the spot and helped him to his feet.

The blind man started wailing: "With great difficulty, I gathered some food today by begging. Alas! Now, I've spilled all the food. What am I going to do?" The lame at once consoled him and said: "Don't worry! I'm a beggar like you! Take whatever food you want from my bowl!"

The blind man was surprised. "You too are a beggar like me? If you give away your food, what will you eat? No! Only when you have plenty can you think of charity."

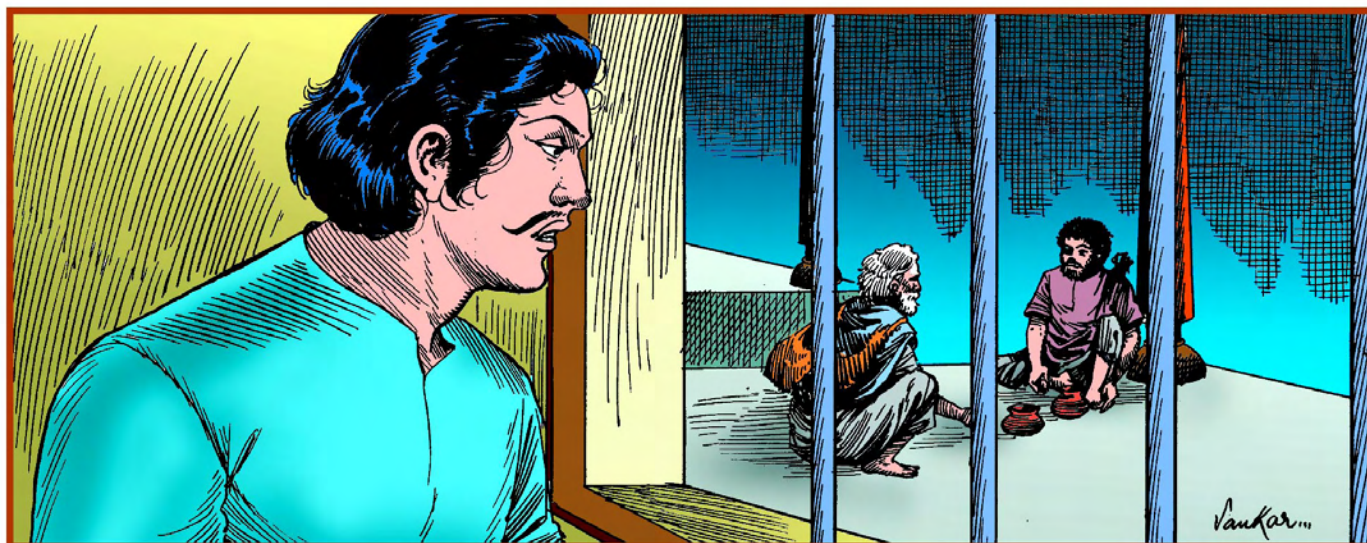
The lame replied: "Not necessary! People who have plenty do not generally think of charity because of their greed. I'm a poor beggar and I know the plight of a hungry man, especially, a blind man like you! Please accept my offer!"

Kishanlal was moved by the compassion

shown by the limping man to the one who was blind. Suddenly, he thought of the words uttered by the lame: 'People who have plenty do not generally think of charity because of their greed.'

'Very true!' he thought to himself. 'Here I am postponing the charitable deed of building a choultry though I've enough means to do it, only because of the uncontrollable greed of my wife and my own inability to overrule her! And here is this beggar freely giving away the food he had got by begging to his companion out of compassion. What an imbecile creature I have all along been! I've no right to delay fulfilling my father's last wish!'

Next day, when he announced his decision of starting construction of the choultry to his wife, as usual, she raised objections. But she was shocked to find him brushing aside her objections sternly and going ahead with his plans.



THE GREEDY WOLF AND THE NAUGHTY RABBITS

Raisy Rabbit and Daisy Rabbit were good friends. One day, they were playing hide and seek in a cabbage field. Suddenly they saw Bittoo wolf coming towards them. Bittoo was a notorious fellow, known for catching unwary animals like rabbits and killing them.

Raisy and Daisy were scared of Bittoo. There was no way of escaping. They should save themselves somehow or other, they thought. Even as Bittoo approached, they hit upon an idea.

Raisy and Daisy suddenly started fighting. The mock fight seemed so real that Bittoo was easily fooled to believing it to be true. He intervened and separated them.

"You foolish ones! Why are you fighting like bulls?" he shouted at them angrily, even as he felt happy that he could get two rabbits at one and the same time.

"Daisy is selfish. She wants to snatch away the golden bracelet," complained Raisy bitterly.

"The bracelet should belong to me, as it was I who had tricked the eagle to part with it," growled Daisy.

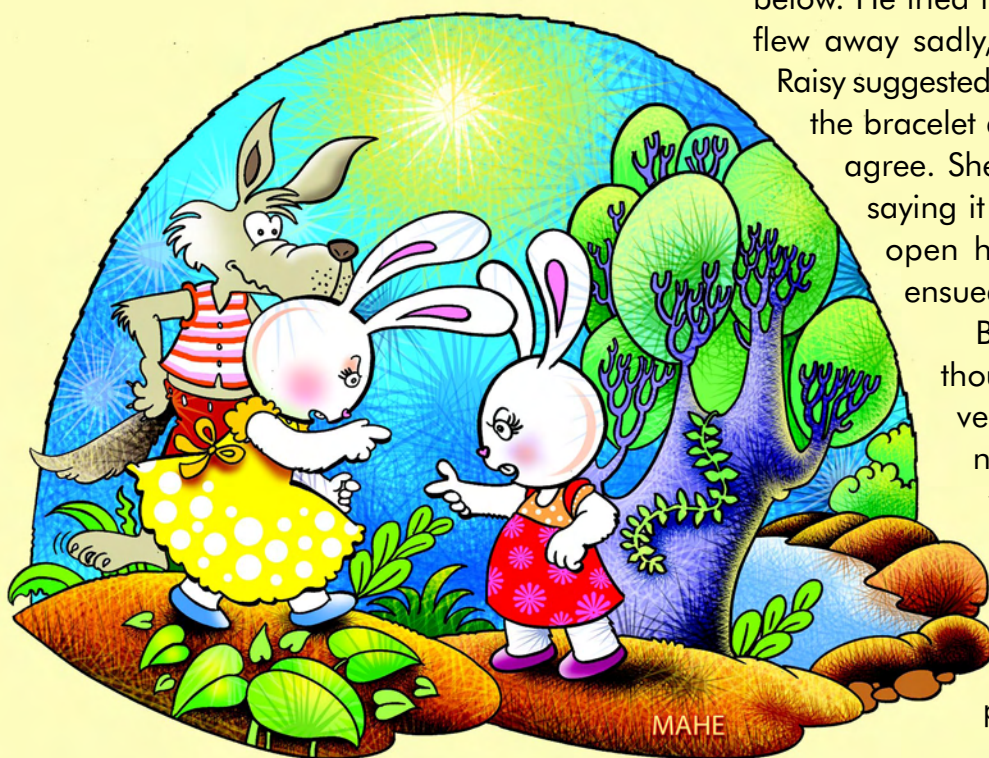
Bittoo was totally confused and could not understand a thing. He wanted to know more about the bracelet they were so bitterly fighting for. He asked them to explain. Otherwise, he would eat them up, he threatened.

Raisy then said, "A little while ago, an eagle came flying our way carrying a glittering object in his beak. Wondering, Daisy asked the eagle what it was. The eagle proudly told them it was a golden bracelet it was bringing from the town for his dear wife as a birthday gift. Alas, as the eagle opened his mouth to answer them, the bracelet slipped off and fell down in the pool below. He tried to retrieve it, but could not. He flew away sadly, cursing his own foolishness.

Raisy suggested to Daisy that they could retrieve the bracelet and share it. But Daisy did not agree. She wanted to keep it for herself saying it was she who made the eagle open his mouth. So, a fistfight had ensued between them over it."

Bittoo listened to the story. The thought of a golden bracelet was very much alluring. As was his nature, he became greedy. He was happy that he had arrived there just in time. He wanted to cow down the rabbits and grab the bracelet for himself.

'These tiny rabbits cannot prevent me. I can simply scare



them away with a big howl,' he told himself. His thought went even further. He wanted to present the bracelet to the queen. She would be immensely pleased to receive such a costly gift, and recommend him to King Lion for being appointed as his Adviser. Surely... the more Bittoo thought of it, the more he became excited.

He asked the rabbits where exactly the bracelet had fallen. They showed him the centre of the pool.

Bittoo then advised Raisy and Daisy to forget about the bracelet and told them he would take it out himself.

Raisy and Daisy pretended to protest vehemently, but they were shooed away by the wily Bittoo.

"I'll kill both of you if you don't keep mum. I'm showing you a great favour by sparing your lives in return for the bracelet," he warned them. So, the rabbits kept mum.

Bittoo was now in high spirits. He went to the pool. The rabbits watched with bated breath, as the wolf walked into the pool whistling. In fact, the pool had quick-sand of which Bittoo was not aware.

As he moved further, Bittoo started sinking slowly, but he was in no mood to realise it. By



the time he felt the danger, he had already gone down up to his neck. He tried hard to come out, but failed. Frightened, he let out a howl after a howl seeking help.

Happy over his plight, Raisy and Daisy clapped and heckled Bittoo. The wolf now realized that the rabbits had tricked him and no bracelet ever existed! But it was too late.

As Bittoo vanished in the quick-sands, Raisy and Daisy heaved a sigh. They patted themselves for getting rid of the cruel wolf so easily, and danced with joy.

- P.V.V. Satyanarayana



WISH FULFILLED AT LAST!

Mrs. Lal was forever telling her husband, "I hate living in this poky little house in this shabby, middle-class neighbourhood! Why can't we move to a more expensive house in an upmarket area?" But Mr. Lal would always parry the question. Finally, one evening he came home and told his wife, "You always wanted a more expensive house, didn't you? Well, you're going to get your wish!"

"Phew! At long last! Anyway, better late than never!" exclaimed Mrs. Lal excitedly. "Now tell me fast, where are we moving to?"

"We aren't going anywhere," he answered gloomily. "But from this month, the landlord has raised the rent!"



LAUGH TILL YOU DROP!

The beauty of the world has two edges, one of laughter, one of anguish, cutting the heart asunder.

- Virginia Woolf



A woman charged with a traffic violation stated her occupation as school teacher.

The judge rose from the bench. "Madam, I have waited years for a school teacher to appear before this court. Now sit at that table and write 'I will not pass through a red light' five hundred times."

Gokul and Umesh went to a restaurant for dinner. As soon as the waiter took out two cakes, Gokul quickly picked out the bigger cake for himself.

Umesh wasn't happy about that: "When are you going to learn to be polite?"

Gokul: "If you had the chance to pick first, which one would you pick?"

Umesh: "The smaller piece, of course."

Gokul: "What are you whining about then? The smaller piece is what you want, right?"



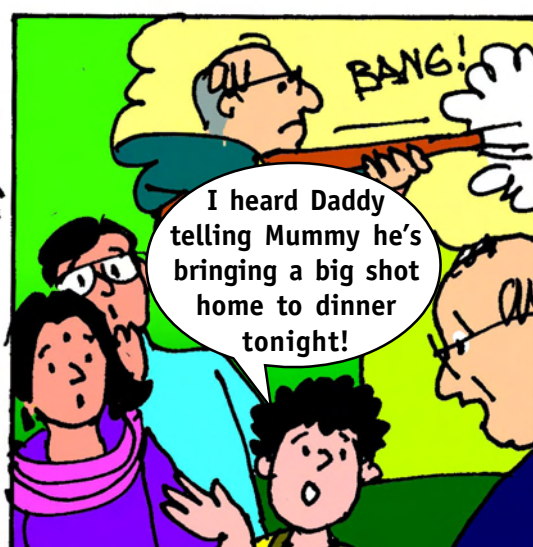
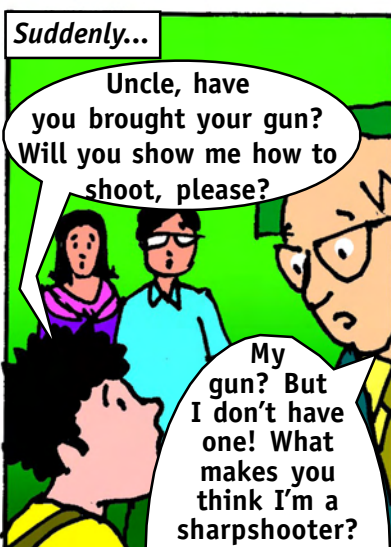
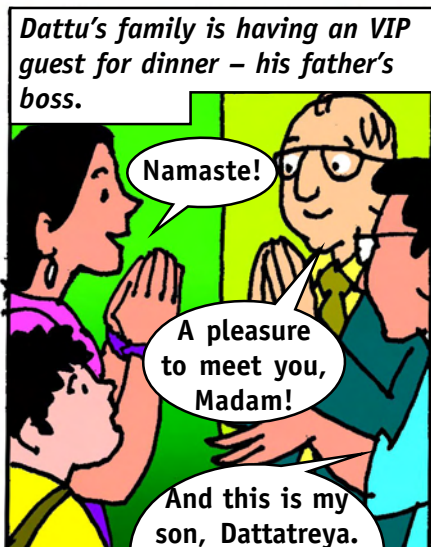
A customer enters shop and shouts: Where's my free gift with this cooking oil?

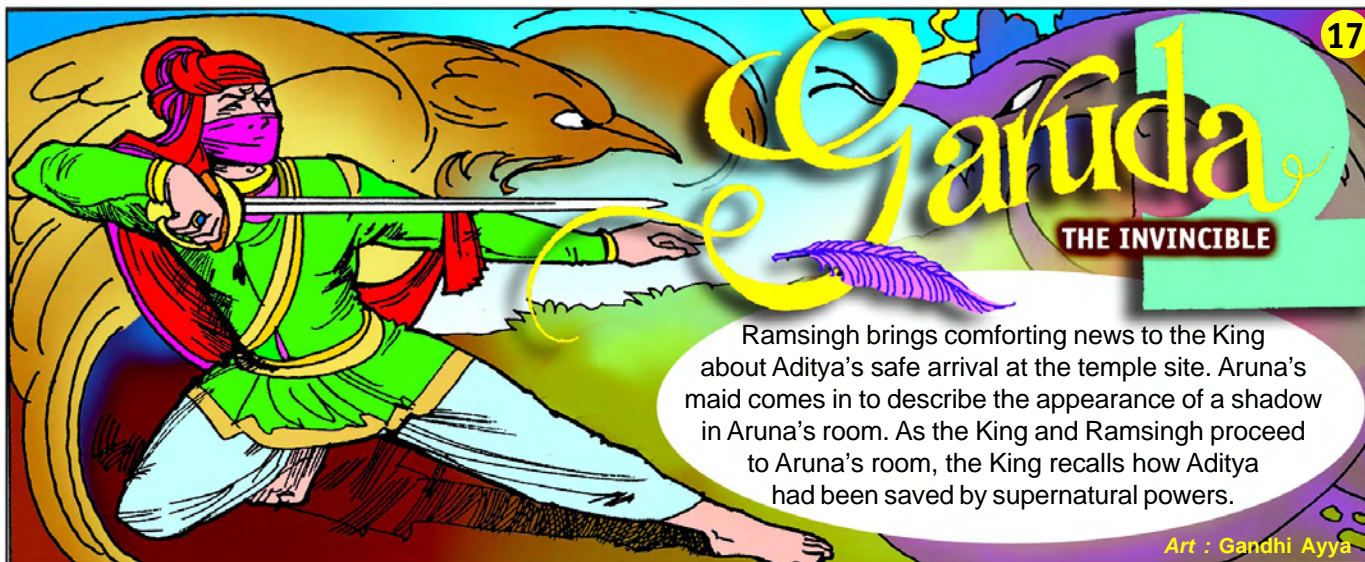
Man: There is nothing free with this, sir.

Customer: Oyez! It's written Cholesterol Free.

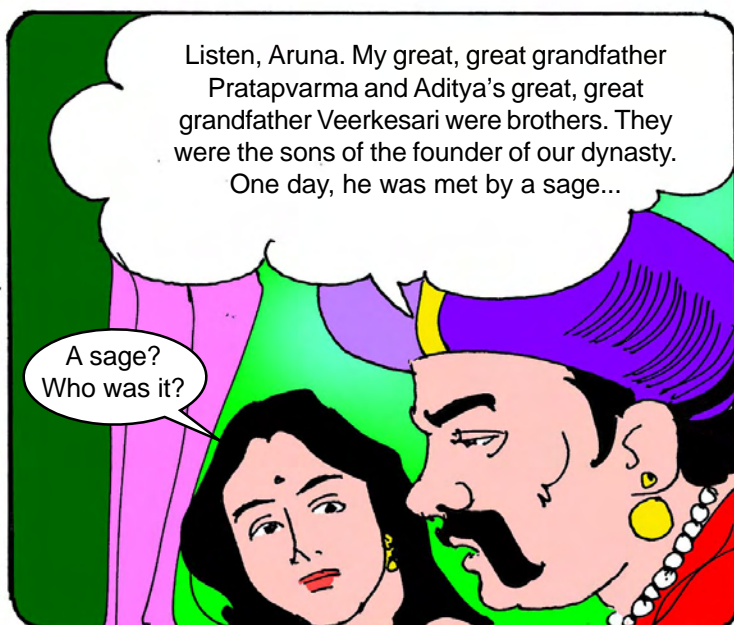
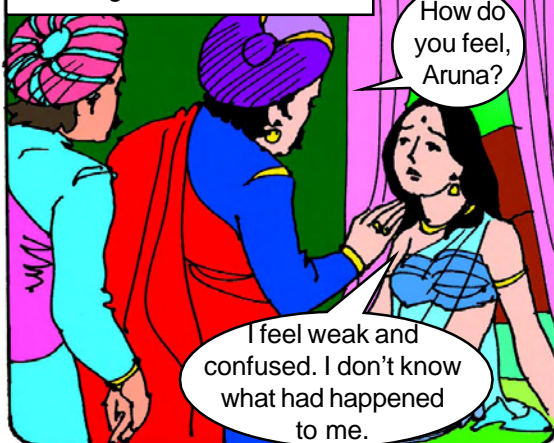
Man: ?!?!?

DUSHTU DATTU





In Chandrapuri... the King and Ramsingh call on Aruna.

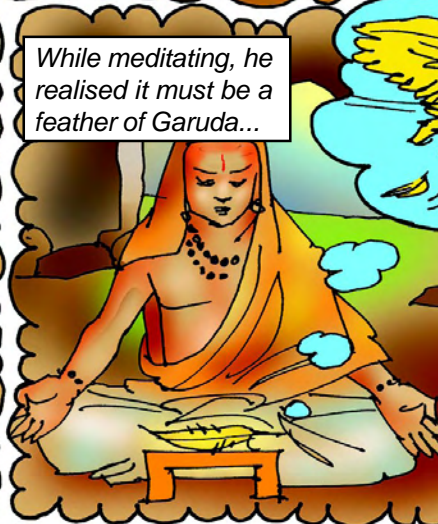




He was Vidyadhar. While wandering in the Himalayas, he saw a feather come falling to the ground from the direction of Mount Kailas...



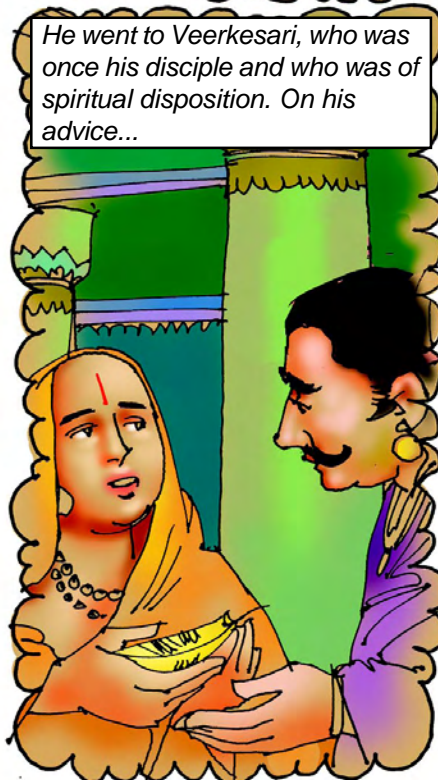
He picked it up with reverence and took it to his cave...



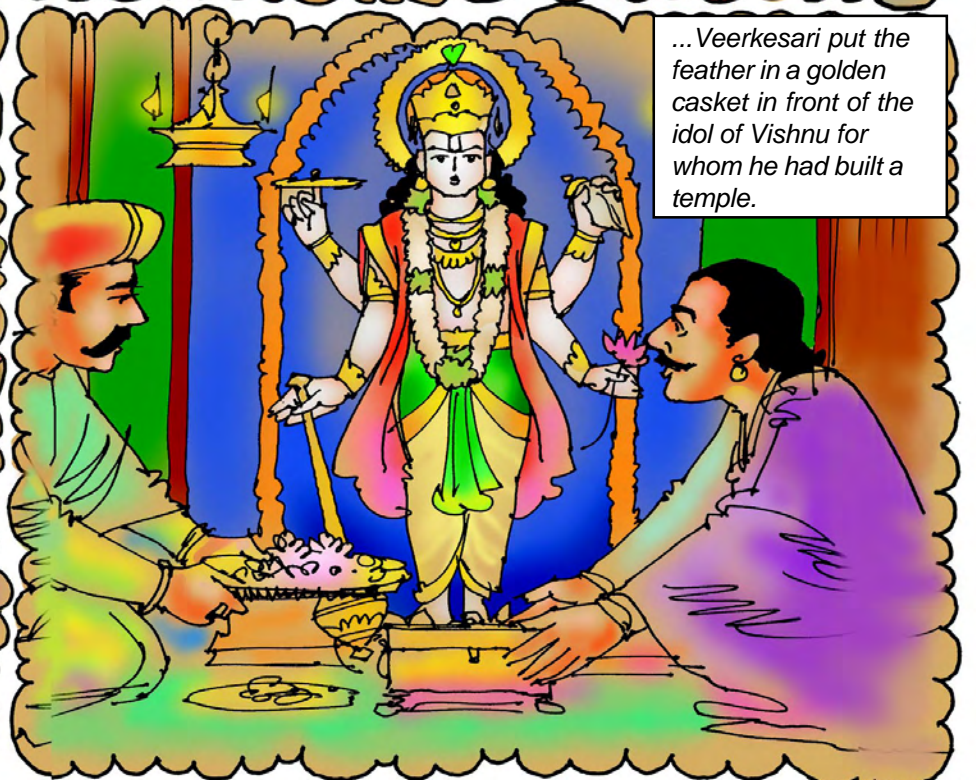
While meditating, he realised it must be a feather of Garuda...



He thought, 'I must entrust it to someone who would take care of it'...

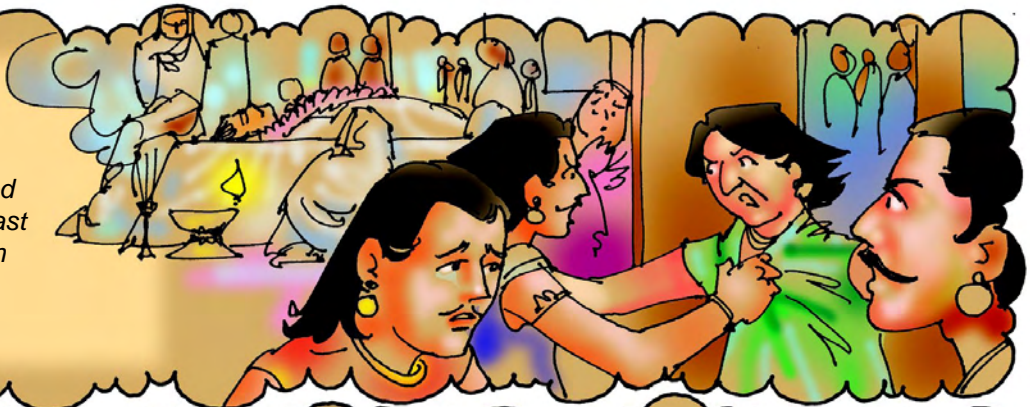


He went to Veerkesari, who was once his disciple and who was of spiritual disposition. On his advice...

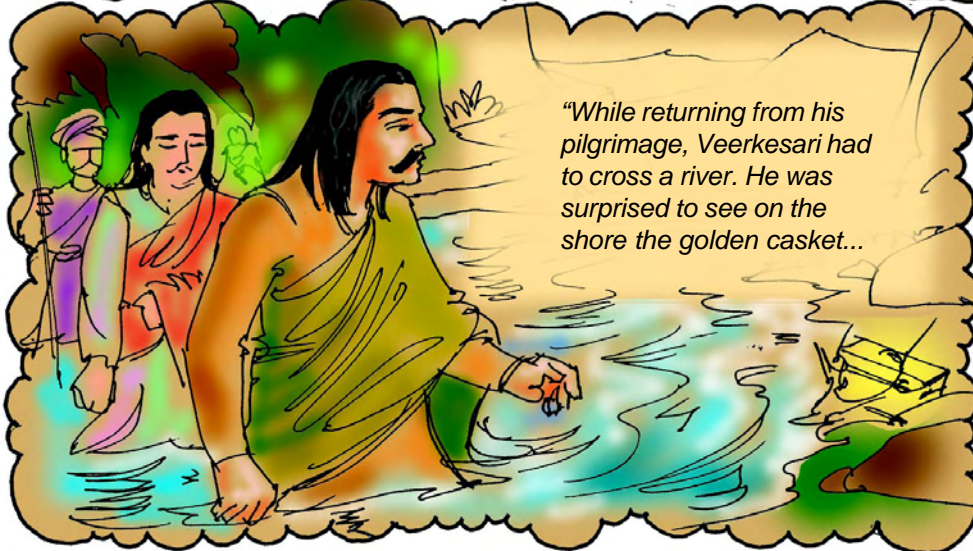
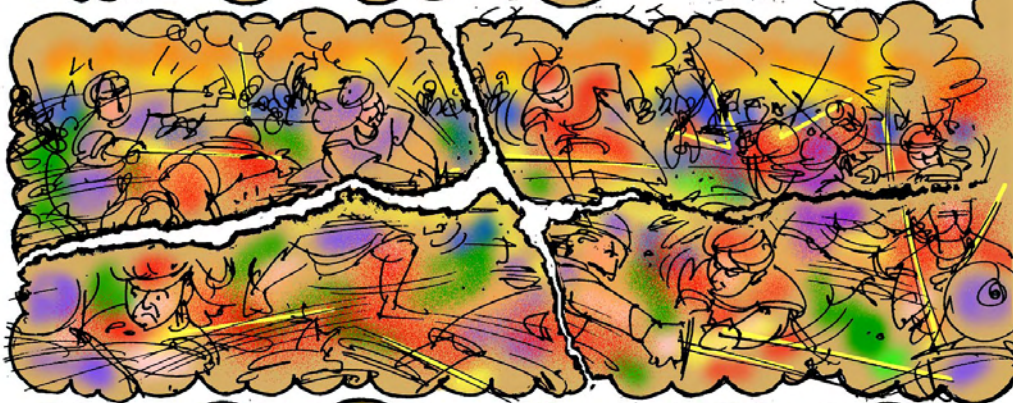


...Veerkesari put the feather in a golden casket in front of the idol of Vishnu for whom he had built a temple.

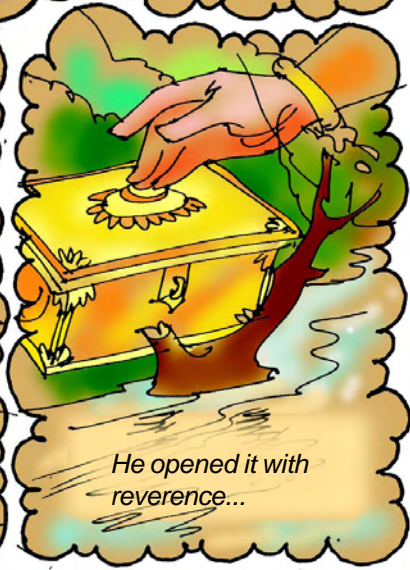
Veerkesari was on a pilgrimage, when King Pratapvarma passed away. His sons quarrelled for the throne and the vast kingdom got divided with each prince becoming independent rulers...



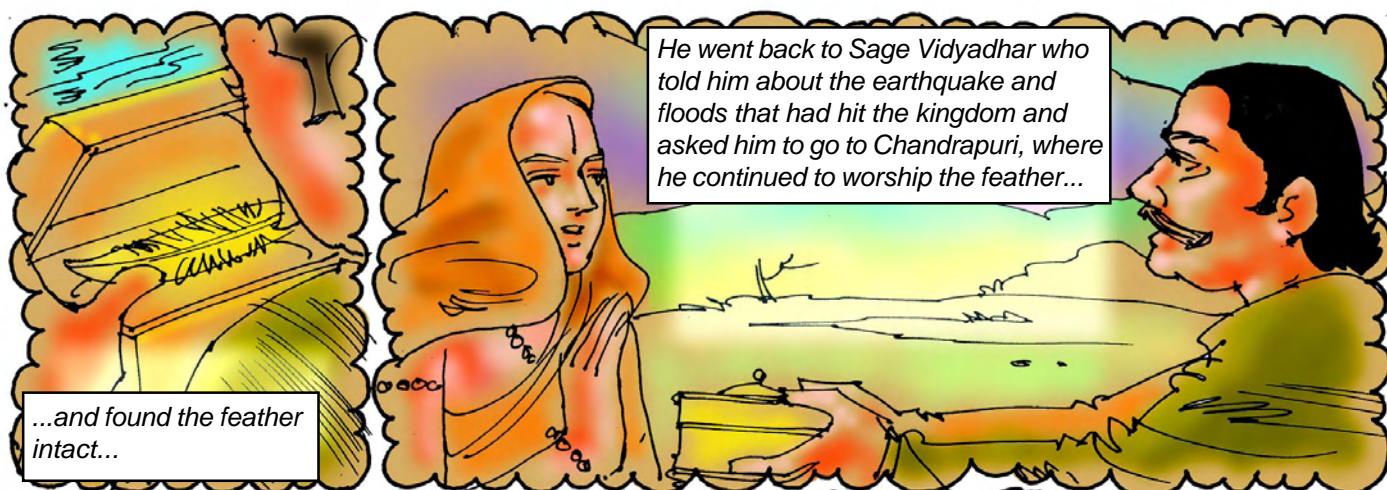
They were always at loggerheads. Suryapuri and Vajrapuri kept aloof from Chandrapuri which fortunately enjoyed a peaceful rule...



"While returning from his pilgrimage, Veerkesari had to cross a river. He was surprised to see on the shore the golden casket..."



He opened it with reverence...

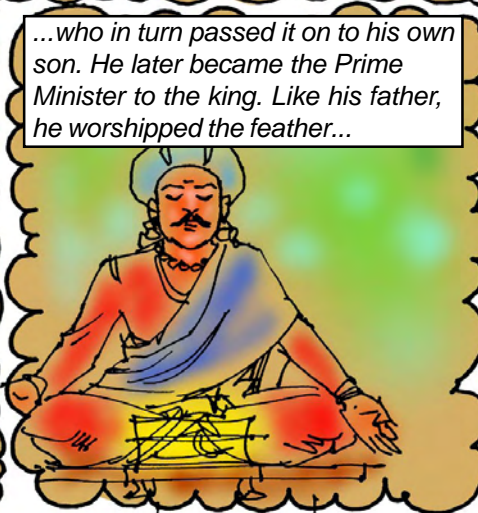


He went back to Sage Vidyadhar who told him about the earthquake and floods that had hit the kingdom and asked him to go to Chandrapuri, where he continued to worship the feather...

...and found the feather intact...



Before he passed away, he handed the feather to his son...



...who in turn passed it on to his own son. He later became the Prime Minister to the king. Like his father, he worshipped the feather...

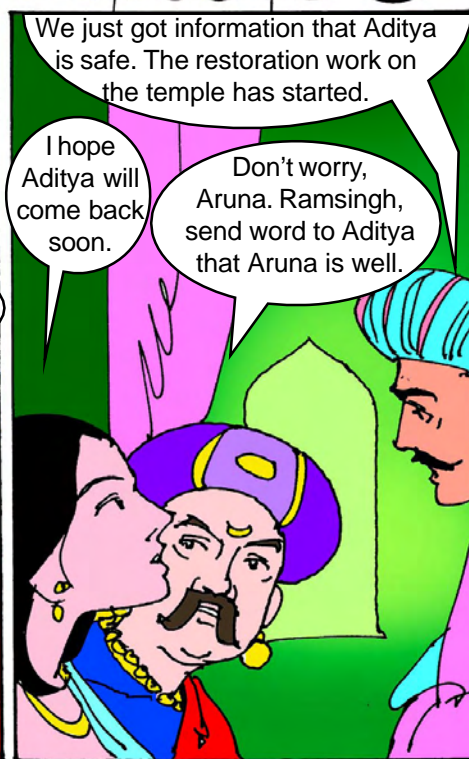


His son Aditya found it along with a note his father had left.



Our Rajguru dreamt of the ruins of the temple in Vishnupuri. He advised that the temple be restored. He said Aditya is the one ordained to do it.

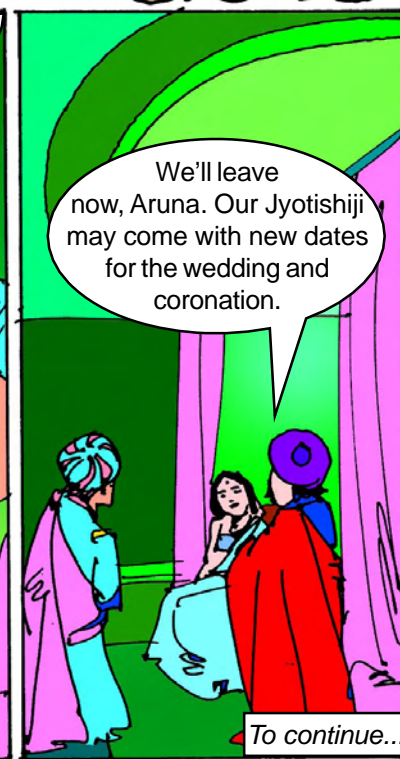
Aditya is blessed with superhuman powers and divine grace.



We just got information that Aditya is safe. The restoration work on the temple has started.

I hope Aditya will come back soon.

Don't worry, Aruna. Ramsingh, send word to Aditya that Aruna is well.



We'll leave now, Aruna. Our Jyotishiji may come with new dates for the wedding and coronation.

To continue...

CHANDAMAMA INDIA QUIZ-5

Co-sponsored by Infosys[®] FOUNDATION, Bangalore

Come May and people make use of the summer holidays for schools and colleges to go places. This month's quiz is on some popular tourist centres and monuments.

What you should do: 1. Write down the answers; 2. Mention your name, age (you should be below 16), full postal address with PIN Code; 3. Mention your subscriber number, if you are a subscriber; 4. Write on the envelope **CHANDAMAMA INDIA QUIZ-5** with your complete address; 5. Mail your entry to reach us by May 31, 2007; 6. The answers will be published in the July 2007 issue.

**AN
ALL-CORRECT
ENTRY WILL
FETCH A CASH
PRIZE OF
RS 250***

* If there are more than one all-correct entry, a lot will be taken to decide the prizewinner. However, the names of all those who have sent all-correct entries will be published.

1. The childless Emperor Akbar sought the blessings of a Sufi saint. After a son was born to him, Akbar built a memorial to the saint. Where is it?
2. Two cities are famous for their observatories which have no modern instruments like telescopes. Name them.
3. Where will you find Jataka tales painted as murals?
4. A palace was converted into a prison to intern a national leader. Who was the leader? Identify the palace.
5. Which is the highest Hindu pilgrim centre?
6. If you want to visit the place where Lord Buddha preached his first sermon, where would you go?
7. Where is Bindu Sagar?
8. A Christian pilgrim centre where apostle St. Thomas became a martyr: where is it located?
9. Which city is famous for 'shikara' rides in a lake? What is the name of the lake?
10. An animal is often described as a 'living fossil'. It is the main attraction of a wild life sanctuary. Which is the animal? Where is the sanctuary?
11. A State in the north has as many as 780 caves. Five of them are the longest in the sub-continent. Which is the State?
12. Where will you go to see the only palace built in the 20th century to give employment to people affected by famine? Name the place and that of the palace.



MASTA AND HIS PISTA

Masta was a grey squirrel. He loved to climb trees. He also enjoyed chasing other squirrels. He had two friends, Tittu and Mittu. They were two brown sparrows who lived on a neem tree.

Every morning, Masta ran up the tree to greet his friends. They chirped happily when they saw him.

One morning, when Masta went looking for some food, he found a big tray full of pista.. The tray was in the sun on the terrace of a house. Masta quickly took a few of the nuts and ran to the neem tree. He dropped them in a hole in the tree trunk. He then went back to get a few more nuts. He ran back and forth several times. By evening, he had collected a lot of pista in the hole . Tittu and Mittu chirped merrily, “*Masta, dear Masta, He has a lot of pista.*”

Masta proudly peeped inside. It was full of nuts.

The next day, Masta went to play hide and seek with his friends. Tittu and Mittu went on a flying spree. At that time, Kaku the crow came to the neem tree. He saw the pista in the hole. His mouth watered. Down he flew and pecked at the nuts. He quickly ate some of them. He

was about to eat some more when Tittu and Mittu flew back to the tree.

“Chirrrr....chirrrr....” they chirped loudly and drove Kaku away.

When Masta returned to the tree, the two sparrows cried, together, “*Masta, dear Masta, Kaku ate his pista.*” Masta was very unhappy.

The following day, Masta asked Tittu and Mittu to take care of his nuts. He then went to play with his friends.

Tittu and Mittu were alert. They waited for Kaku. They were ready to drive him away. But Kaku did not come. Instead, there came Peenu, the big tomcat. His eyes fell on the pista in the hole in the tree. At once, he pounced on the nuts and grabbed them. Tittu and Mittu were watching him. But they did not chirp. They did not drive Peenu away. They were terribly afraid of him. They hid themselves behind the neem leaves and sat quietly. Peenu ate all the nuts and went away with a big smile on his face.

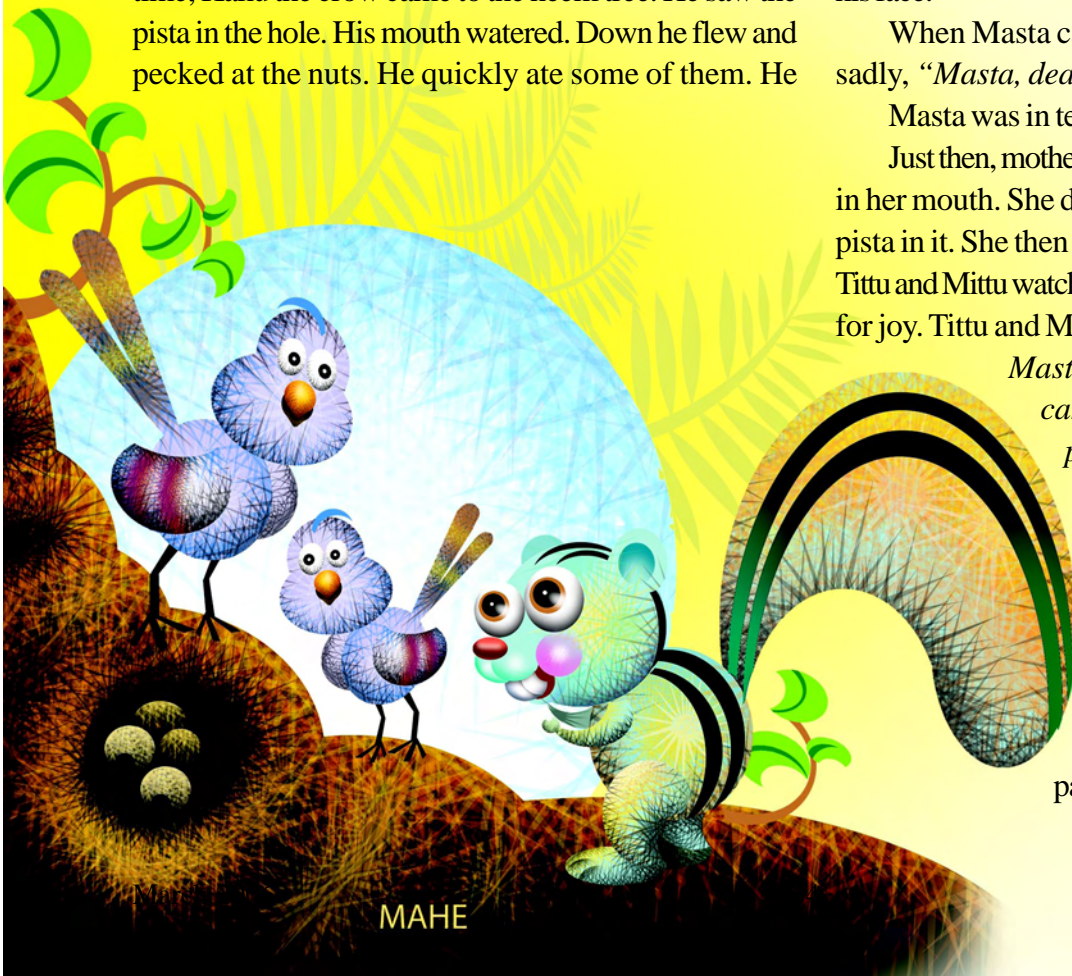
When Masta came back, Tittu and Mittu chirped sadly, “*Masta, dear Masta, Peenu ate all the pista.*” Masta was in tears.

Just then, mother squirrel came along. She had a pista in her mouth. She dug a hole in the ground and put the pista in it. She then covered the hole with mud. Masta, Tittu and Mittu watched her carefully. Then Masta jumped for joy. Tittu and Mittu chirped joyfully. “*Masta, dear Masta, Who can find his pista? None can get his pista, He’ll eat all his pista.*”

Masta ran away to gather nuts. He brought a lot of pista and buried them under the ground. No one could steal them now.

One fine afternoon, Masta and his friends as well as Tittu and Mittu had a jolly good ‘pista party’.

- Indira Anantakrishnan

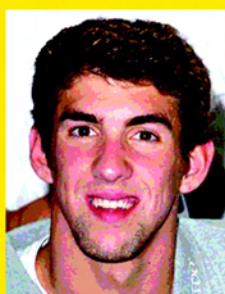


SPORTS

QUEEN OF WORLD BILLIARDS

India's **Chitra Magimairaj**, hailing from Karnataka, for the second successive year became the world champion in Women's Billiards. She beat Emma Boney of England 187-147 at the World Ladies Billiards and Snooker Championships held on April 4 at Sheffield, England. Last year, it was again Emma Boney whom she beat in the final to earn the sobriquet, Queen of World Billiards. The 33-year-old world champion strangely is yet to win a National title!

CHITRA MAGIMAIRAJ



MICHAEL PHELPS

FIVE RECORDS IN 8 DAYS

That is the American **Michael Phelps's** achievement in swimming. During those eight days, he won as many as seven world championship gold medals. The seventh gold medal came to him at Melbourne on April 2. He smashed his own record in 400 metres individual medley in 4 min. 6.22 seconds, improving his earlier record by 2.04 seconds.

KONERU HUMPY

CHESS RATINGS

This magazine has already reported Viswanathan Anand's elevation to No.1 position in FIDE rankings for 2007. **Koneru Humpy** of Andhra Pradesh is No.2. Another Indian player, Krishnan Sasikaran has been placed at No.25.



HIGHEST PARTNERSHIP



B. MANOJ KUMAR



MD. SHAHBAZ TUMBI

B. Manoj Kumar and **Md. Shahbaz Tumbi**, both 13, are students of Old Bowenpally School in Hyderabad. In the Inter-school (under-13) Cricket Tournament last November, they scored triple centuries each to take their school's total innings to 721 runs against St. Peter's High School, which was skittled out for 21 runs in seven overs. Manoj scored 320 not out, while Shahbaz made 324 not out. The BCCI Chief, Mr. Sharad Pawar, himself handed the partnership record Guinness Certificate to Manoj and Shahbaz.

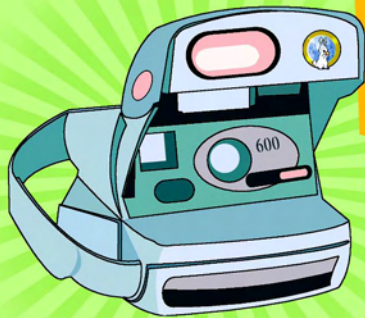


Photo Caption CONTEST

You may write it on a post card marking it:

Photo Caption Contest, CHANDAMAMA

and mail it to reach us before the 20th of the current month.



NARAYANAMURTHY TATA

Can you write a caption in a few words, to suit these pictures related to each other?



NARAYANAMURTHY TATA

Congratulations!

March 2007 Lucky Winner:

C.JAYALAKSHMI

6 Nehru Nagar
Hubli-580 020
Karnataka



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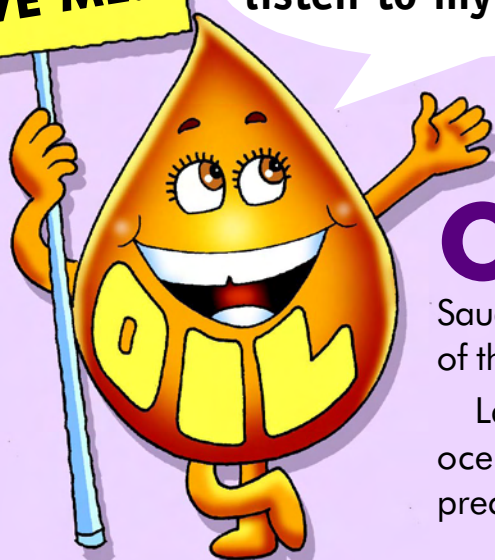
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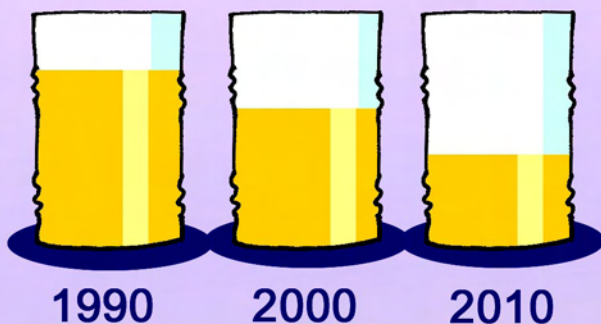
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Large quantities of oil are also found below the ocean bed. Many countries are producing this precious liquid through 'off-shore drilling'.

Unfortunately, India has very little of its own oil. We necessarily have to depend greatly on what is imported from oil-rich nations.

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